

Jewish Letters:
O R, A
CORRESPONDENCE

Philosophical, Historical *and* Critical,
B E T W I X T A
J E W and his CORRESPONDENTS,
In different P A R T S.

T O M E I I I.



N E W C A S T L E :
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M D C C X L I.





TO THE
Valiant and Magnanimous
Don QUIXOTE
De LA MANCHA,

Invincible Knight of the Lions, &c. &c. &c.



Llustrious Hero of *Cervantes*,
incomparable Destroyer of
Sheep and Puppets, couragi-
ous and intrepid Assailant of
Wind Mills, perpetual Ter-
ror of the *Alguazils de la Santa*
Hermandad *, &c. &c. &c.
allow this third Volume of JEWISH LETTERS
to fly to the Sanctuary of your powerful
Protection, and, by that Means, to avoid the
Persecution of a Knight, who, full as mad
and extravagant as your *Honour*, has solemnly
swore their Ruin and Destruction. In vain
do the Publick attempt to save them; he
A 2 defies

* The *Santa Hermandad* is a Brotherhood in *Spain* instituted to
suppress Robbers, and the *Alguazils* are their Serjeants.

DEDICATION.

defies the whole Universe, and boasts, that he'll crush them into Atoms, though guarded with Armies of Enchanters. In this distress'd Condition where can they fly but to your all-conquering Banner. Come, O delirious Knight, oppose Folly to Folly: Humble your Rival, the insolent Knight of *Iberia*; and, after you have trampled the crack-brain'd Pretender under foot, make him own, that he has no Title to the Privilege of being so extravagant as your *Worship*. Considering how long he has appear'd as your Competitor for the Scepter of *Momus*, one would think that such monstrous Arrogance should have provok'd your just Indignation; and yet you allow him to acquire Reputation without the least Disturbance. Pray consider, that Glory and your Profession call upon you to take the Field, since you can't but know, that, by the Laws of Knight-Errantry, you're bound to redress Grievances, to comfort the Afflicted, and to protect the Oppressed. From all which it results, that the JEWISH LETTERS have a just Claim to your Protection; and, in full Hopes that you will appear like yourself in their Defence, the Translator intitles himself, with superlative Respect,

Incomparable KNIGHT,

Your most humble, and

Most obedient Servant,

M. D.



P R E F A C E.

JUST as I had finished this third Volume, I receiv'd from Amsterdam Tome XXIII. of the Bibliotheque Françoise, in which I found a Letter, wherein, under the specious Pretence of representing the State of the Sciences in Spain, there's a warm Attack made upon a certain Performance, not indeed plainly named, but so well describ'd, that one may easily see that nothing but the JEWISH LETTERS can be meant by it.

At first, I thought it was not worth while to answer this Criticism, of which the Author passes in the World, as well as in the Republick of Letters, for a Man a little crazy, and a perfect Copy of the famous Don Quixote; and, truly, 'tis well known, that he's as passionately fond of the Spanish Nation,

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as the Hero of La Mancha was of his incomparable Dulcinia. I did not therefore think myself obliged to take Notice of such a Person's Objections, and would have persisted in my first Resolution, had I not afterwards reflected, that, this impertinent Letter being inserted in a Journal in which we sometimes see curious and useful Things, several People might believe the Blow was struck by the Journalists themselves, and therefore 'tis proper to point out some of the Blunders which swarm in this ridiculous Criticism.

*The Knight of Iberia opens the Scene with the Defence of all the Authors that have been criticized in the JEWISH LETTERS. As he is brought into Play himself as much, if not more, than any of the rest, he ought to sympathize with them in their Misfortune; and so we see him appealing to the Publick for the Injustice done him. He treats as Ignorants (says he) Men of Learning, who have given the Publick an Opportunity to judge of their Erudition. My Answer is, That this Reproach is entirely false, and that I defy him to name an Author worthy of Esteem, whom I've not commended. Des Cartes, Gassendi, Bernier, Mallebranche, Bayle, Locke, 's Gravesande, Vitriarius, Boerhaave, Daniel, de Thou, Pascal, Sirmond, Petau, Lami; in short, all the Learned, of whatever Country, Condition, or Religion they be of, Papists or Protestants, Jesuites or Jansenists, are all alike to me: If they truly had Merit, I made no Scruple to do them Justice; and
have*

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have follow'd the same Rule with Poets and Romance Writers, having commended Corneille, Racine, Milton, Pope, Petrarch, Tasso, Guarini, Don Lopes de Vega, Cervantes, Crebillon, Voltaire, Rousseau. 'Tis true, that, even at the Time I allowed the last to have Wit, I thought I might and ought to deny him what a solemn Decree of the first Parliament of France had taken from him. These are all the good Authors I have mentioned, and I shall always have a due Regard to their Works. Where are then the Writers that I've honour'd with the Title of Block-heads, and who had, nevertheless, given the Publick an Opportunity to judge of their Learning? I fancy the Critick design'd to draw his own Picture; but how could it enter into his Head, that, for having copied three Pages of Moreri's Dictionary, and three more from Corneille's, and stitching them together, with some Scraps from other Books, not to mention Baudrand, whose Dictionary he has almost wholly robb'd, he could deserve the Name and Reputation of a Man of Learning? But I proceed to other Complaints.

'Tis surprising (says this Critick) that a Man of Birth, Education, Wit, Fortune, and considerable Employments, should abandon all, and take up the mean Trade of Author. These Eulogiums are a perfect Resemblance of the Garlands with which Victims are dress'd up; and my being raised so high, is only to make my Fall the more conspicuous. To this my Answer is, That though it were true Fortune

tune

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tune had placed me in a brilliant State, I might, without Shame, abandon it, in order to consecrate my Life entirely to the Study of Philosophy, and for enjoying that sweet Satisfaction which accompanies those who cultivate the Sciences. Were ever the Works of Rochefoucault, Montaigne, Malherbe, Racan, or Buffi-Rabutin, objected to them as a Crime? The famous Cardinal Richlieu was as anxious for having the Reputation of being an Author, as he was for the Destruction of Spain. No doubt but our Critick despises this Cardinal, and deems him guilty of two egregious Faults. But, to proceed,

He does me the Honour to class me among the Libertine Writers, who set Pen to Paper with no other View but to run down Religion, Virtue, Knowledge and Merit. As to Virtue and Religion, I have made it, I think, sufficiently appear in the Prefaces to the first and second Volumes, that none but a downright Calumniator could be guilty of such Language; and as to my want of Respect for the Learned, the Reader has but just now seen how far I'm guilty of that Charge. I must confess, indeed, that if the Critick is really a learned Man, I have done wrong to condemn his Works: But I submit this Point to the Judgment of the Publick.

As this Censurer has not thought proper to descend to Particulars, but only runs out into general Invectives against me, while he lavishes Encomiums upon a Number of wretched Authors, 'tis impossible I should
answer

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answer him as to the Faults that he may find in this Book; and therefore, before I conclude this Preface, I shall only examine some of the Praises which he has so liberally bestowed upon some of the Spanish Writers: And I hope to make it evidently appear, that his Compliments have thrown more Dirt upon them than the most abusive Criticism; so that the beautiful Passage in Tacitus, Pessimum inimicorum genus laudantes, may be justly apply'd to him in this Case.

Our Critick, first of all, founds the Goodness, Beauty and Justness of the Spanish Genius on the Works of St Teresa, Lewis of Granada, and the Reverend Father Rodrigues, and then falls foul upon me, on a Supposition that I am not acquainted with those Books. But I must take the Freedom to tell him, that I know them as well as he, but am very far from esteeming them as he does, particularly Rodrigues, some of whose dull Works I have read very meanly translated, and so generally despised, that Moliere made no Difficulty to ridicule them in one of his Pieces. Is't possible that the Critick should not know this Line?

Elle lit Rodrigues, fait l'Oraison mentale.*

Perhaps 'tis wilful Ignorance; for, as to Theatrical Matters, he ought to be no Novice.

I come

* She Roderick reads, then puts up mental Prayer.

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*I come next to the Dramatick Poets, whom our Critick has commended in a Manner so ridiculous, that, if he had intended to cut them down with the most keen Satyr, he could never have fallen upon a better Way. Here are his own Words: The Spanish Dramatick Authors have been long the Magazines from whence ours provided themselves. Scarron and Montfleuri are Instances. Can any thing be said more to the Dishonour of Spanish Poets, than to make them the Inventors of the most wretched Farces, and to give them, for Disciples and Imitators, the very Scum of our Writers? What Notion must we have of certain Poets, if we were told that Pradon had form'd his Taste from their Works? Should we not have Reason to look upon them as the Excrements of the Republick of Letters? Can one hinder himself from saying, that this Critick's Encomiums are monstrous Things? Heaven protect me from such a Panegyrist, and let me have his Hatred rather than his Friendship. To shew him the Difference of my way of commending the good Spanish Writers from his, I shall here insert what I said of Don Lopes de Vega in Letter CXVIII. That Author has wrote such excellent Comedies, that the great Corneille said, he would have given two of his best Tragedies to have invented the Character of the *Menteur*, i. e. *Liar*. Thou knowest that it was from the Spanish Original that the French Poet composed his Piece. Let the World now judge whether the Critick or I have been most injurious to the Spanish Nation.*

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Nation. But, in running the Parallel of what both of us have said of their Historians, I'm in hopes I shall the more easily obtain a favourable Judgment.

*He confines himself to the History of Arragon, by Zurita, and to the General History of Spain, by Mariana, and by a Caprice not to be express'd; of the two Authors which he mentions, one ought to be abhorred by all good Men: Not but that Mariana's History is a good Book, but he has composed another *, which the Parliament of Paris condemned to the Flames, and which the Jesuites themselves have disown'd. In this Treatise he insinuates, that it is not only lawful, but laudable to kill a King who is an Heretick or a Tyrant, and extols to the Skies the execrable Monk who murder'd Henry III. not being asham'd to call him the Honour and Glory of France. Since our Critick was resolved to quote only two Authors, he had done well, methinks, not to have mention'd Mariana, or, at least, to have followed my Example, and made mention at the same time of several others, whose Names I shall here transcribe in the same Order as they are commended in Letter CXVIII. Antonio de Solis, Sandoval, Antonio de Herrera, Don Bartholomew de las Casas. Nor have I forgot to praise the Authors of Romances, and Poets, who deserve the Esteem of Judges, such as Michael de Cervantes, Matheo Aleman, Don Alonzo de Hercilla, Juan Rufo, de Christoval de Ver-ves, &c. It may be easily judged, by the Number of
those*

** De rege, & regis institutione,*

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those Authors, if I aim'd at diminishing the Glory of one Nation to raise that of another. 'Tis true, I did maintain, and do still, that the Spaniards have not one Philosopher among 'em, and that none they can have as long as their Inquisition subsists: But is not the whole Universe convinced of this Truth, our Critick excepted? who, like a magnanimous and unconquerable Knight, is determin'd to support his Opinion, right or wrong; in which he perfectly resembles the Hero of Cervantes, with whom there's no living in Peace without purely and simply confessing, that the very Faults of his charming Dulcinea are superior to the Virtues of the greatest Princesses.

In order to give the more Weight to his Opinion, the Critick has Recourse to the Authority of Father Rapin, who, in his Philosophical Reflections, says, that the Spaniards excel in Metaphysics. But the Blunder of that Author is no Excuse for my Antagonist's; and here's the Proof. By the Compliment which this Jesuit pays to the Physicks and Logick of Aristotle, it will be very discernable whether his Opinion, in Matters of Philosophy, ought to be look'd upon as decisive. Nothing appear'd (says he) that was regular and solid, either in Logick or true Philosophy, before Aristotle. This Genius, so reasonable and intelligent, went so deep into the Abyss of the human Mind, that he penetrated to its most secret Recesses, by the exact Distinction he made of its Operations. Before him none had founded*

* Rapin's *Reflex*, No. IV. Pag. 373.

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founded the Depth of human Thought, to know how far it reach'd. *Aristotle* was the first who discover'd this new Passage to Knowledge, by the Evidence of Demonstration, and to proceed geometrically to Demonstration by the Infallibility of Syllogism, the most accomplish'd Work, the greatest Effort of the human Mind. *To shew the Impertinence and Ridicule of this Encomium, and what sort of Books of Philosophy were in Father Rapin's Opinion Master-pieces, I shall only quote a Passage from Des Cartes, another from Mallebranche, and a third from Locke. Whoever would be more fully convinced of the lost Labour of the Greek Philosopher, may consult the illustrious Gassendi, in his Exercitationes paradoxicæ adversus Aristotelicos. I begin with transcribing Mallebranche's Opinion *.*

Aristotle seldom or never reasons but upon the confused Ideas which we receive by the Senses, and other vague, general and indeterminate Notions, which represent nothing particular to the Understanding: For the usual Terms of this Philosopher are only proper to express confusedly to the Senses and the Imagination the perplexed Notions which we have of sensible Things, or to make us talk in so loose and indeterminate a Manner, that we can express nothing distinctly.

Now for Des Cartes, in his Turn, who thus speaks: The Logick of the Schools is, properly

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speaking,

* *Mallebranche, Recherche de la Veritæ, Liv. V. Ch. XI. P. 388.*

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speaking, nothing but a Dialectick, teaching us the Method of communicating to others what we know, or even also the speaking of several Words without Judgment upon Things we know not, consequently it corrupts good Sense rather than to augment it *.

I shall now finish my Remarks on Father Rapin with this Passage out of Mr Locke. We reason (says he †) much better, and more clearly, when we only observe the Connection of Proofs, without reducing our Thoughts into Method, or forming them into Syllogism.—God hath not been so sparing of his Favours to Mankind, as only to make them two-legg'd Creatures, and to have left to Aristotle the Care of making 'em rational Beings.

We now may see how far Father Rapin may be rely'd upon in what regards Philosophers; and since he is profuse in his Praises of Aristotle, 'tis not at all surprizing to see him throwing out Encomiums on the Spanish Metaphysicians, who were all zealous Followers of Aristotle. But, to shew either the Ignorance or Knavery of my Adversary, if there be so many excellent Philosophers and Metaphysicians in Spain, why does he not name some of them? Because he could not possibly do it, or, at least, not without making himself more ridiculous than he was before.

To

* Des Cartes Principes de la Philosophie. Preface. † Essay on human Understanding, Book IV. Chap. XVII,

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To finish the Answer which I have taken the Trouble of making to his Objections, I shall now endeavour to let the Publick see how grossly he asperses me with affecting to decry the Spanish Nation. I own I have said, and do now repeat it, that they are proud, haughty, lazy, superstitious, and Slaves to the Monks: But, as I have exposed their Faults, just as I have done those of other Nations, so I have likewise done Justice to their Virtues; and, without repeating all I have said on this Subject, I shall only quote the following Passage from Letter CVI.

Since the Reign of *Philip V.* the Government of *Spain* has been under the Direction of very able Ministers; but the Broils to which all Courts are liable, have removed them from their Posts. The Encomiums run high upon the Cardinal *Alberoni*: Not only Strangers, who are numerous in this Country, but many *Spaniards*, do Justice to this able Minister.—Since the Accession of *Philip IV.* and *Charles II.* her Troops are numerous, good, and well disciplin'd. The Kingdom is increased in People a full fourth more than it was, by the great Number of *French* and *Flemings* now established in it. And this Crown, which, for a certain Time, was upon the declining Hand, makes now a handsome Figure in *Europe*, and is respected as formerly.

I think there's now enough said to shew the Folly, Ignorance and Malice of this pretended Iberian Knight,

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for I have no Inclination to make any Answer to the gross Abuse with which he concludes his Letter. God forbid that I should ever give any Handle to introduce Billingsgate Language upon Parnassus. The Mind alone is a Member of the Republick of Letters, and the Body has nothing to do with it. Were it not thus, we should be often at a Loss in what Rank some People ought to be placed. For Instance, where should we place a Man, who, after being a RopeDancer, Ballad Singer, or a Player, in his Youth, should, in his old Age, marry two Actresses Maids, one after another, and last of all a Turkey Driver, promoted to the honourable Post of Beer Drawer in an Ale-house, and afterwards to be his own Cook Maid; sure I am that the Critick must own, if this Person was a Member of the Republick of Letters, it would be no easy Matter to find a proper Place for such an Original.

*Before I conclude this Preface, I shall beg the Reader's Allowance for a Word or two on the different Translations of the JEWISH LETTERS, of which two Persons in London have made honourable mention in their different Papers, the first intituled, The Gentleman's Magazine, and the other, Fog's Weekly Journal. But I can't help saying, that it gave me some Concern to see one of these two Translators * sometimes affecting to change the Title of certain Letters, and adding that of Mr instead of the Names of Jacob Brito and Aaron Monceca;
so*

* The Author of Fog's Journal.

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so that it became uncertain whether these Letters were Originals or translated; and, by the by, 'tis to none of the worst that he has made this Change: For Instance, Letter LXXIV. which begins thus, *La premiere Lettre qui je t'ai ecrite d'Egypte, doit t'avoir donnè une Idee des Ruines d'Alexandrie, &c.* Thus English'd: My first Letter from Egypt must have given thee a general Idea of the Ruins of Alexandria, &c. †. As such unfair Dealing is a manifest Breach of all the establish'd Laws in the Republick of Letters, be it therefore known, from this Instant, to this Translator, that, if he persists in that fraudulent Practice, I shall have Recourse to the Tribunal of our Lords the Journalists, to the Intent that I may have Justice done me by them, and that the Translator may be strictly enjoyn'd to render to every one his Due. But I hope he will not oblige me to enter into a Law Suit with him; and that, for the future, he will imitate the Candour of his Brother of the Quill, who makes no Suppression of Titles, which certainly comes under the Denomination of Theft in the Jurisdiction of the Belles Lettres. Nevertheless, Justice obliges me to thank him for the elegant and concise Manner in which he translated my Letters, particularly the Lth, which begins thus: *J'ai couru, mon cher Brito, un des plus grands Dangers que j'essueray de ma Vie. i. e.* I have narrowly escaped, my dear Brito, the greatest Danger I ever was, or shall be, I hope, exposed to while I live. He has been so good as not to

* See No. 417. of Fog's Journal.

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change the Title of this Letter, by substituting the Word Monsieur in place of Brito. When I consider that some Authors have injured me, and others borrowed from me, I'm almost tempted to look upon myself as a Person of some Consequence in the Republick of Letters.

*But to pass to another Translation, which I'm told will soon appear in the Dutch Language, the MS being actually in the Hands of a Bookseller *. I have not seen it, and though I had, not understanding the Language, I could have made no Judgment: But a Person, who is Master of it, assures me, that it is very well done, which is all I know of the Matter, not having the least Acquaintance with the Translator.*

I am inform'd likewise from Germany, that the two first Volumes are already translated into High Dutch; but I know as little of this Language as of the other.

But what is still more singular than all the rest, is, that I have Advice of two Volumes being reprinted at Avignon, but wretchedly mangled and deformed, according to the laudable Custom of Booksellers and Printers under the Pope's Dominion.

Jewish

* This Translation has appear'd since this Preface, and the Translator has done me the Honour of a Dedication. I'm glad of this Opportunity of publickly acknowledging the Favour, and of thanking him for communicating my Letters to a Nation for which I have an infinite Esteem.



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LETTER CV.

AARON MONCECA to ISAAC ONIS.

IHAVE endeavour'd to give thee an Idea of the *Dutch* in general, and now I shall be more particular. The Populace in this Country, as I have told thee in my former Letters, are brutal, and often insolent. 'Tis a difficult Matter (says a modern Author) to work a Change upon them. Laws can be made for the Service of the State, and for the Payment of Taxes, but none are made upon the Subject of good Manners; and nothing that wants the Force of a Law, is binding upon the Dutch. A sort of Equality, necessary in Commonwealths, is partly the Cause of the Insolence of the People. Should the
Coach

*Coach of any of the Lords of the States General meet a Countryman's Waggon or Cart upon the Road, he must give way as well as the Clown, and take an equal Share of the Trouble. His Footmen would be sure not to insult the Driver, far less to beat him, he being a Citizen of the Republick, and owning no Magistrate, but when he is in the Exercise of his Office; elsewhere all are upon a Level *.*

I can't better justify the Magistrates from the Charge against them, in foreign Countries, of not only suffering, but sometimes likewise authorising the Insolencies of the Populace. Liberty begets a sort of Haughtiness that, with Men who have not Sense enough to discern their Happiness, so as not to make an Abuse of it, often degenerates into Insolence. But whatever Inconveniencies are occasion'd in civil Society, by the Brutality of the Vulgar, they are perhaps more supportable than those which flow from despotick Power; for tho' nothing be more insufferable than the Insolence of the Mob, yet still it must be allow'd, that nothing is more dangerous and precarious than the Happiness of a State, where one Person has the Power of doing whatever he pleases, without being call'd to an Account for his Conduct. The Rank to which an arbitrary Prince finds himself exalted, does not a little contribute to corrupt his Morals, and strip him of the good Qualities that Nature has bestowed upon him. *Insolence (says Herodotus †) springs from present Happiness and Prosperity; and whoever has that Vice, is guilty of all the rest.* Into what Misfortunes is a State plung'd by a bad Prince who governs? To what Calamities is it not expos'd? Let us put into one Scale the Danger of having a Sovereign who forgets that he is the Father of his People, and into the other, the Inconvenience

* *Memoirs of the Marquis d'Argens*, Pag. 291. † *History of Herodotus*, Lib. III. Pag. 216.

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venience attending the Pride and Arrogance of the Vulgar, we shall find an equal Weight of Evil; and upon due Reflection we may conclude, *That in all Governments there is something good, and something bad; and that the wisest Course is to esteem that the best under which we are born, and chearfully submit to it* *. If the French, Spaniards, Germans, &c. may accuse the Dutch of having granted the common People too extensive Privileges, the latter, by way of Retaliation, may charge home upon them many Inconveniencies in civil Life, and often more dangerous.

The Dutch may be rank'd into four Classes.

The common People form the first.

The second is made up of Merchants and Burghers, who are a Set of Men entirely employ'd in Trade and domestick Affairs; in their Characters open, friendly, and extremely careful to preserve their Liberties and Properties, without any Thoughts of encroaching upon those of others: Their Air is heavy and dull, which is perhaps owing to the Climate, and to some Remains of the Spanish Humour; but this Phlegm only fits upon their Countenances, for their Hearts are open and sincere.

The third Class contains the *Patricians*, that's to say, the Civil Magistrates, who live in so plain and simple a Manner, that they are not in the least envy'd by their Fellow Citizens. The *Oftracism* of the Greeks † would be entirely useless in Holland. The Magistrates, if they can be but useful to their Country, are not at all solicitous about acquiring the Esteem of their Countrymen by Prodigalities and Presents, inconsistent with the Publick Good; but most exact in the Discharge of the Duties incumbent on them, and in maintaining

* *La Bruyere's Characters*, Pag. 453. † Ten Years Banishment to which the *Athenians* condemn'd the Citizens that were too powerful.

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taining good Order and Union, so necessary for the Tranquillity of the Republick.

The fourth Class is composed of the Nobles, very few in Number. Thou'lt perhaps be surpris'd to hear that the Nobility form a distinct State in *Holland*. Most People, in the neighbouring Countries of this, imagine, that Quality is quite out of Doors, or that, since the Establishment of the Republick, there's no Prerogative attach'd to it; but this is an Error. When the *Dutch* chang'd the Government, the Privileges of the Nobility, existing at that Time, were preserv'd, such as they had enjoy'd under the Dukes of *Burgundy* and *Charles V.* These Privileges are so considerable, that their College, composed of eight Members, has the Right of sending Delegates to all the other Supreme Colleges. 'Tis true, that their Number is very small, and that there are a great many more in *Friseland* and *Guelderland*. These Noblemen have neither the Petulancy of the *French Petits-maitres*, nor the Haughtiness of the *German Barons*, nor the surly, disdainful Air of the *English*. They discharge, with great Honour, Frankness and Sincerity, all the Employments committed to their Charge; and it were to be wish'd that the Nobility all over *Europe* had the same Manners and Sentiments: In that Case, the World would not be pester'd with so many petty Tyrants.

I must own, my dear *Isaac*, that if Providence had permitted me to chuse my native Country, I would have been born a *Dutchman* or a *Venetian*. I know that there's a considerable Difference in the Government of these two Republicks; but I also know, that all their Views are the same, and tend to render Man happy and free. The Republick of *Venice* acts with her Citizens as a tender, but strict, Mother, that loads her Children with Favours, but, jealous of her Authority, does not
permit

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permit them to dive into her Designs. Thus the noble *Venetians* act with the Burghers and inferior People*. The Republick of *Holland*, on the contrary, is a complaisant Mother, looking upon herself as a Sister, who determines nothing without the Advice of her Children, and who, to banish all Manner of Jealousy, has put them upon an equal Footing; so that she's under no Apprehensions of the large Cities encroaching upon the lesser: In short, she has foreseen and guarded against the Inconveniencies arising from the Ambition of over-topping, and, upon the Basis of a perfect Equality, established the Happiness of her People. In the XIth Article of the famous Union of *Utrecht*, 'tis expressly stipulated, *That all and every one of the Lordships shall inviolably preserve their Privileges, Immunities, Rights, Prerogatives and Customs, transmitted to them from their Ancestors.*

As no City is subject to another, there can be nothing determined with regard to publick Affairs in a Province, but by the unanimous Consent of all the Towns in it; and nothing is to pass in the States General, without the Approbation of the seven Provinces. This Government would seem, at first, to be obnoxious to tedious and hurtful Delays; and 'tis true that it is attended with Inconveniencies, but 'tis as true that these very Inconveniencies are, in a manner, the Security of the State, the Band that unites the whole, and preserves Harmony in all the Parts. Besides, the Number of skilful Persons, through whose Hands all Affairs do pass, does not a little contribute to strip them of every thing that may seduce or deceive the Mind. A Prince has but a transient View of Things, and seldom sees them but by the Eyes of his Minister. If his Deliberations in Council are quick, they're not a whit the surer for that. A

Slowness

* *Citadini.*

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Slowness in Affairs, upon which depends the Safety of the State, is not at all amiss. I know very well, that too much is dangerous; but supposing it true, that the *Dutch* Government is attended with Delays that are prejudicial, this Fault is made up by so many Advantages, that, 'tis my Opinion, it deserves a distinguish'd Rank among the wisest and best Governments.

One Advantage drawn from the Necessity of consulting all the Towns in Affairs of Consequence, is, the Dependence which the States General, who represent the Body of the Nation, have upon their Principals and Constituents, without whose Consent and Concurrence they cannot act; so that, though they appear to be the Soul of the Republick, they are but the Organs of it, and can neither make Peace nor War, form new Alliances, nor augment the Taxes, but by Consent of all the Provinces, who can do nothing without the Participation of their Towns. From all which it appears, that ambitious, designing Men, at the Head of Affairs in such a Government as this, can never throw the State into such Troubles as have happened in the *Roman* Commonwealth, and in many modern Republicks, by their granting a too extensive Power to certain Citizens.

At *Amsterdam* there's a perpetual Senate of thirty six Persons, who have a Right to chuse the *Bourguemestres* and *Sheriffs*, and these, in their Turns, dispose of the inferior Employments. There's so good Order observed in the different Distributions of Posts, that it is impossible a *Bourguemestre*, more ambitious than his Brethren, can assume to himself alone the Right of Nomination to Preferments, or enhance them to his Creatures.

The Senate of *Amsterdam* has neither the Grandeur nor Solemnity of that of *Rome*; but the Members

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bers that compose it, have neither the foolish Ambition, nor chimerical Ideas, of the ancient *Romans*. Intent upon preserving the Privileges of their Fellow Citizens, upon the Means of making their Trade flourish, and upon procuring them the Conveniencies of Life and Liberty, they aspire not after new Conquests. All the *Dutch* have the same way of Thinking: They are satisfied with the Territories they possess, and endeavour to live in Peace, not only with the Powers of *Europe*, but also with the most savage Nations, who have found, in the *Dutch*, Men of Humanity; whereas the unfortunate People of *Mexico* and *Peru* have found, in the *Spaniards*, only ravenous Beasts, more cruel than Tygers thirsting after Blood and Slaughter.

The *Spaniards* have cemented the Colonies of which they are possess'd by Murder and Treachery, whilst the *Dutch* have establish'd theirs by Mildness and Clemency. In several Parts of the *Indies*, the People, among whom they have made Settlements, look upon them as Tutelary Gods, who bring them a thousand useful and necessary Things for Life; and the Savages subjected to the *Dutch*, feel the Advantage of the Industry and Trade of that laborious Nation.

Though every Mortal is employed in Trade at *Amsterdam*, they have not however been unmindful of the Sciences. There's an illustrious School for *Theology*, the *Belles Lettres*, *Philosophy* and *Medicine*; and besides this, which the Youth who are disposed to Study may have the Advantage of, there are in *Holland*, and the neighbouring Provinces, several famous Academies, in which Number are those of *Leyden*, *Utrecht*, *Franeker*, *Groningue* and *Harderwyck*. These Academies abound with People of Merit, among whom there are several first Rate Scholars.

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Notwithstanding the particular Care which the *Dutch* have of Trade, the Basis and Foundation of their Occupations, yet it must be allowed that they are not unmindful of the Sciences; and, perhaps, there is scarce a Place in *Europe* where there are so many Booksellers and Printers as at *Amsterdam*. I have been credibly informed, that there are near four hundred, which furnish the Universe with good and bad Books; of both Sorts we have Plenty here, as well as of Authors, who may be rank'd into two Classes, viz. *Hunger-starv'd* and *Mercenaries*. I shall take an Opportunity, ere long, to entertain thee with what I can learn that's worth taking notice of, both with respect to the Authors and their Works: In the mean time, let me beg of thee to be more frequent in thy Letters, (for methinks 'tis long since I heard from thee) and to take particular Care of thy Health.

Amsterdam, *****.



LETTER CVI.

JACOB BRITO to AARON MONCECA.

MY former Letters treated of the common People, and of the Monks: In this I shall endeavour to give thee an Idea of the *Grande*s, who, in this Country, (to wit, *Spain*) claim a Right to Laziness as a Part of their Privileges. A *Spanish* Don is a sober Man, which is, without Doubt, a lovely Quality, were it not occasion'd
by

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by Poverty and Laziness. In his Composition there's a Mixture of Pride, Seriousness, Ignorance, a strong Prepossession in favour of his own dear Person, and of his Country, a Contempt of all other Nations, particularly the *French*, who have the Honour of his Hatred: He laughs at Fame purchas'd at the Expence of Blood, and therefore is not fond of the Trade of War, but rather chuses to pass his Days quietly in his Country Village, amusing himself with some old Romances, the Works of St *Theresa*, or some other *Visionary* of the same Mould. In fine, a *Spanish* Don is a Creature servilely submissive to Monks, and the born Slave of the Fair Sex*.

The *Grandeos* of *Spain* exceed the inferior Nobility in Pride and Haughtiness. They formerly contended with their Sovereign, but *Philip V.* by Birth a *Frenchman*, has assumed that Authority over the *Spanish* Nobility which the Kings of *France* have over theirs, and the *Grandeos* are now as submissive as the rest. The Arrogance of some rose to such a Height in the Reign of *Charles II.* Predecessor of the present King, that having order'd two Comedies to be acted at the Palace upon his Recovery, and commanded that no Person, without Exception, should go upon the Stage, the

C 2

Duke

* When *Seneca* says, that none but Beasts can glory in Laziness, he has traced out useful Lessons for the *Spanish* Gentry; and how happy would it be for them, could they but take the Advice! *Gloriari otio, iners ambitio est. Animalia quedam, ne inveniri possint, vestigia circa cubile ipsum confundunt. Idem tibi faciendum est. Seneca Epist. 69.* However pungent this Irony may be, it perfectly agrees to a *Spaniard*, poring on Romances all Day long, playing upon his Guitar all Night, confin'd to his Village, useless to his King and Country; nothing remains to secure him in this peaceful, idle Life, but the Means of concealing the Place of his Retreat from those that would force him from it. To accomplish this, he ought to imitate those Animals who surround their Habitation with every thing that may serve to conceal it.

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Duke *d'Ossuna* placed himself upon it, and refused to retire though he was told his Majesty's Orders.

The Grandees of *Spain*, notwithstanding the Vanity and Haughtiness which they assumed to themselves in the preceding Reign, were obliged to put up with several Things very shocking to their high Spirits; but the most intolerable Mortification they met with, was that of a certain *Valenzuela's* being made a Grandee. This Man had been Page to the Duke *de l'Infantado*. Upon his Master's Death he found himself without a Protector, and so poor, that he became *passante & corte*, that is to say, *a Man reduced to live upon his Wits*. By the Interest of a Monk he found Means to get into a petty Post in the Palace. To a handsome Person he join'd a lively Genius, which he resolved to employ to Advantage. In that View he scraped Acquaintance with a *German Lady*, named *Donna Eugenia*, the Queen's Confident. He had the good Luck to appear as lovely to this Lady as she did to him, and was allowed what the *Spaniards* call *Galanteur*; a Term made use of when one courts a Lady belonging to the Queen. Gallantries of this Sort are so common, that we often see married Men publickly making Love to their Mistresses. *Donna Eugenia* was not insensible to her Lover's Sighs, which she recompenced with putting him in Possession of her Person. Fortune, that had resolved to elevate *Valenzuela*, did not stop here, but brought him into Favour with the Queen Regent, who, from Post to Post, conducted him to the first Dignity of the Kingdom, by creating him a Grandee of the first Class, with the double Key.

This Promotion thunder-struck all the *Spanish Nobility*. Their Vanity got such a Shock, and they were so stunn'd, that they had not Power to complain

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complain of the Injury done them; they only stared at one another, like Persons mute and stupidify'd: At last, by a wonderful Effort, they got Courage to pronounce these Words, *Valenzuela es Grande!* *O tempora!* *O mores!* One of the Grandees was so sensibly touch'd with the Affront put upon the whole Body of the Nobility, that he resolv'd never to see the Sun any more, because he did not abstract his Rays when so horrid a Crime was perpetrating. This Lord took Bed upon the first Accounts of this fatal News, where he continued till he died, about ten Years afterwards. In the Morning, when the Servants came into his Apartment, one of them opened the Window, and his Lord ask'd him very gravely, *Quehase el Tiempo?* i. e. *How's the Weather?* And the next Question was, *Mi Carnizero es Grande?* i. e. *Is my Butcher made a Grandee?* No, my Lord, answered the Servant. *Very well, shut the Window,* continued he. Thus the Comedy was over till next Day, when it began again; and did so every Day till the Hour of his Death, nothing being able to reconcile him to the Sun, nor to Mankind.

The Fortune of this *Valenzuela*, which had occasioned the Folly of this Lord, was destroy'd with the same Rapidity that it grew. The Queen, who protect'd him, having received Orders from *Charles II.* to retire to a Convent in *Toledo*, her Favourite, after being stripp'd of all his Employments, and pull'd out of a Church where he had taken Sanctuary, was banish'd to *Chila* in the *Philippines*. He supported his Disgrace with great Constancy; and when it was notify'd to him, that the King removed him from all his Posts and Honours, *I see* (said he, very calmly) *that I'm more unfortunate than when I came to Court, and when the Duke de l'Infantado took me to be his Page.*

The Ruin of *Valenzuela*, which seem'd to repair the Affront the Grandees had received in his Elevation, turn'd out nevertheless quite otherwise, and expos'd them to a greater. The *Roman* Pontiff, having been inform'd that the principal Lords had, by their own Authority, forc'd him from his Asyle, excommunicated all those who had been concern'd in that Action; and, in order to be discharged of the *Roman* Censures, they were obliged to go, as the worst of Criminals, in their Shirts, with Ropes about their Necks, to the Imperial College, where the *Nuncio Mellini* did them the Favour to whip them, by way of Discipline: Thus the *Spanish* Pride was humbled by the *Italian*, which exceeds the other.

The Grandees of *Spain* had a long Struggle with the Monks about the Government of the State, and, by Turns, kick'd out one another. In the Minority of *Charles II.* a Jesuit, nam'd *Father Nitard*, was at the Helm of Affairs, by the Interest of the Queen: He was displaced by *Don Juan*, Natural Son to *Philip IV.* The People had conceived such a Hatred to this Jesuit, that, though he was *Grand Inquisitor*, they boldly cry'd in the Streets, *May the King long live; and the noble Don Juan; may he always conquer his Enemies: But Wo be to the Jesuites that persecute him.* Whatever Hatred the *Spaniards* bore *Father Nitard*, he never lost Hopes of defeating his Rival; but the enraged People, not satisfied with his Disgrace alone, insisted upon his Banishment out of *Spain*, and accordingly mutiny'd till it was promised that the discarded Minister should be sent to *Italy.* The general Exclamation was, *Let us be rid of the Jesuit, let him be gone.* Away he went, and the Populace loaded him with injurious Language as he pass'd through the Town. Thou'lt no doubt think the Fate of this Jesuit to be pitied; not at all.
 Could

Could he not have extricated himself out of this Scrape, he had not been a Jesuit. Being retir'd to *Rome*, he was some time after made a Cardinal, by the Intrigues of the very *Spanish* Court that had exil'd him some Years before.

If the Station of a Minister of State be every where attended with Trouble and Danger, 'tis more so in this Country than any where else. It often happens, that a Man, who has had all possible Success in a Negotiation committed to his Conduct, must be sacrific'd for the Honour of the Nation. He'll be charg'd with not having had a due Regard to its Interest. They'll put to his Account the disadvantageous Articles of a Treaty which he has been order'd to conclude in the very Terms of it, of which here follows a convincing Instance.

On the 18th of *August* 1680, the *Spaniards* took, by Surprise, a Fort which the *Portuguese* had begun to raise in the Island of *St Gabriel*. As the two Nations were then in Peace, the Court of *Portugal* was highly provok'd at this Procedure, and resolv'd to have ample Satisfaction, which the Envoy of *Portugal* at *Madrid* was order'd, by the Prince Regent, to demand. The *Spanish* Court having made an evasive Answer, *Portugal* began to put itself in a Disposition to obtain by Arms what was refused. *Spain*, unwilling to come to a Rupture with *Portugal*, at a Time when a War with *France* was look'd upon as unavoidable, sent the Duke de *Giovenazzo* in quality of Ambassador to *Lisbon*, who, on his Arrival, made Complaints, and demanded Satisfaction; a Method then in Practice by the Court of *Spain* in Negotiations: But this Ambassador was soon made to know, that he must change his Tone, and that no Quibbling would do; notifying to him in plain Terms, that the Satisfaction demanded must be granted, or that other Means would be made use of to obtain it.

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it. After much debating, the Duke, before signing the Articles, dispatch'd an Express to *Madrid*, to acquaint his Court with the State of Affairs, and to receive the last Orders. Upon which the Ministry upbraided him, in the most publick Manner, with want of Judgment, and Fidelity to his Prince; asserting, that his Conduct had been void of Prudence and good Sense, in concluding so disadvantageous a Treaty, which, by his Instructions, he had no Power to do. All these Marks of Resentment and Anger were exhibited for the Honour of the Nation; and yet not a Moment was lost in concluding the Agreement, the Ratification whereof was sent, in all Haste, to the Duke *de Giovenazzo* *.

Since the Reign of *Philip V.* the Government of *Spain* has been under the Direction of very able Ministers; but the Broils to which all Courts are liable, have removed them from their Posts. The Encomiums run high upon the Cardinal *Alberoni*: Not only Strangers, who are numerous in this Country, but many *Spaniards*, do Justice to this able Minister. Since the Accession of *Philip V.* to the Crown, *Spain* has recovered one Half of the Losses to which she was exposed by the bad Management of those Persons who held the Reins of Government during the Reigns of *Philip IV.* and *Charles II.* Her Troops are numerous, good, and well disciplin'd. The Kingdom is increased in People a full fourth more than it was, by the great Number of *French* and *Flemings* now established in it. And this Crown, which, for a certain Time, was upon the declining Hand, makes now a handsome Figure in *Europe*, and is respected as formerly.

'Tis thus that the Grandeur of a State depends upon the Princes that govern it, or on those to whom

* Memoirs of the Court of *Spain*,

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whom they commit the Management of Affairs. How many Empires have, in a little Time, mounted to the Pinnacle of Grandeur, when every thing seem'd to prognosticate their Ruin, and this brought about by the prudent Conduct of one or two Sovereigns, who repair'd all the Evils done by their Predecessors? Who could have imagin'd but that, at the Death of *Henry III.* *France* would have been turn'd upside down, and pull'd to Pieces? Every thing seem'd to portend its Ruin; and yet, eight or ten Years afterwards, she was in a Condition, by the good Management of King *Henry IV.* to revenge the Affronts she had received from her Neighbours during the Time of her Adversity. Never had *Spain* more Cause to be afraid of *France* than when Monachal Fury destroy'd that great Prince. Then *Spain* was flush'd with Hopes of recovering the Superiority over her Rival, but the Cardinal *Richelieu* accomplish'd, under *Lewis XIII.* what *Henry IV.* had begun. That Nation saw, with Astonishment, its Grandeur shaken to the very Foundation, and knew, though too late, that the *French* were infinitely more skilful than they in improving their Advantages.

Though *Spain* has not within itself the Advantages which *France* may boast of, yet two or three Reigns may raise it to a higher Pitch of Grandeur than ever it arrived at before, which may be easily judged by what we have seen it do within these few Years.

Take care of thyself, my dear *Monceca*; may the God of our Fathers load thee with Plenty and Wealth, and make thee the Father of a numerous Family.

*Madrid, *****.*

LETTER



LETTER CVII.

JACOB BRITO to AARON MONCECA.

BEFORE *Philip V.* my dear *Monceca*, the Kings of *Spain* were Slaves to their Grandeur: They strictly observed a certain Regulation call'd *Etiquette* *, and which contains all the Ceremonies which the *Spanish* Monarchs are obliged to observe; the Clothes they are to wear, those that are proper for the Queens their Spouses, the proper Seasons for going to the Royal Palaces in the Country, how long they are to remain in them, the Days of Procession, taking the Air, Journeys, and the Hours of going to Bed and rising, the Presents which the Kings make to their Mistresses, how they are to be disposed of when some Rival is prefer'd, &c. Nay, I was even assured that certain Days are mark'd down in this Paper, in which the Monarch is not to lie with the Queen; such are the *Dog Days*, against which *Cleantis* so agreeably exclaims in *Moliere* †. And, to speak the Truth, what can be more disagreeable to a Prince than to debar him from lying with his Wife, when the Spirit, or, more properly speaking, the Flesh moves him? I can't comprehend what mighty Merit the *Spaniards* could find in this Sort of Celibacy, so as to make it an Article of the *Etiquette*. A King of *Spain*, in Love with his

* A Note or Scroll of the Ceremonies. † See his *Amphitruon*.

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his Wife, was as much to be pitied as *Charles II.* of England, when he was in the Hands of the *Scots* Presbyterians, who made him attend to four Sermons every Day, enjoin'd him Penances, and would by no means allow him to touch a Die or a Card *.

The *Etiquette*, or Ceremonial, was still harder upon the Queens, who were not to indulge themselves in the most innocent Freedoms.

The Dutcheß of *Terra-Nova*, *Camerera major*, or first Lady of the Bedchamber to *Charles II.*'s Queen, was constantly buzzing in her Ears, that a Queen of Spain was not to look out at the Windows. An Adventure happen'd to this Princess, where the punctual Observance of the Ceremonial had almost cost her her Life. She was passionately fond of Riding. Several fine Horses were brought her from the Province of *Andaloufia*; and being got upon one, she was scarce mounted when he rose upon his two hind Feet, and was within an Ace of tumbling backwards upon her when she fell from him, but unluckily one of her Feet stuck in the Stirrup: The Horse fell a kicking, and dragg'd her along, so that her Life was in the utmost Danger. All the Court was Witness to this Spectacle, but none of them attempted to give her any Assistance, lest an Encroachment should have been made upon the Respect due to the Ceremonies of the *Etiquette*; for no Man whatever, under Pain of Death, is to touch any Part of the Queen of Spain's Body, and particularly her Foot. Why this Part rather than her Hand, I know not, but so it was; and none durst approach the Queen to rid her Foot of the Stirrup. *Charles II.* passionately fond of his Wife, and who, from the Balcony, saw her in this Danger, cry'd out most lamentably; but the inviolable Custom, and the forbidden Foot, restrain'd the grave *Spaniards*, till at

* *Voltaire's* Letters about the *Englisk*.

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last two Cavaliers, the one named *Don Lewis de las Torras*, and the other *Don Jaime Sotomayor*, resolved, at all Events, to save her Majesty, notwithstanding *La Lei del Pié por la Reina*, i. e. *The Royal Foot Law*. The one laid hold of the Bridle, and the other quickly disengaged her Majesty's Foot, putting a Finger out of Joint in rendering her this Service; which was no sooner perform'd than they got home, caus'd their Horses to be saddled, and took the Opportunity of the general Consternation to make their Escape, in order to avoid the Punishment they had incurr'd for violating so august a Custom.

In the mean time the Queen, somewhat recover'd from her Fright, desir'd to see her two Deliverers. A young Lord, their Friend, told her, that, to escape the Punishment due to such an Action, they had been obliged to make their Escape. The Queen, a *French* Woman, knew nothing of the *Heel* Prerogative, and, without her Fall, would never have had any Notion of such a Thing. She found the Custom of punishing those who attempt'd to save her Life, very impertinent. She easily obtain'd their Pardon from the King her Husband, made them a handsome Present, and took them under her Protection.

The same *Etiquette* that render'd the Queen's Heel so sacred, clipt her Revenues very considerably. She had formerly five hundred Pistoles monthly, but two hundred were cut off for certain Charities, or Bounties; for you must know, that it assumed a Power of regulating the Princesses good Works.

Whatever Restraint the Queens of *Spain* lay under, some of them have found Means to dip a little into Gallantry, and got rid of a troublesome ridiculous Confinement. *Philip IV.*'s Wife, if Credit may be given to the Historians of that Reign,
took

took a Fancy to the Count *de Montereï*; but the Question was, how to let him know her Sentiments. The *Etiquette* had settled the Ceremonial with regard to the Kings, but it was silent with respect to the Queens. This Princess could think of no better Expedient, than to drop a Paper, which she held in her Hand, when the Count was giving her an Account of some Affair which she had committed to his Care: He snatch'd it up immediately, and, kneeling, presented it. *You'll perhaps think (said the Queen) that this Paper is something of Importance; you, yourself, shall be Judge.* The Count unfolded it and read these Words, *E-stoy toda la Noche, despierta, sola, triste, y descando; mis Penas son Martirios, mis Martirios son Gustos*; i. e. *I spend the Nights without sleeping, alone, dull, and forming Desires; my Pain is a Martyrdom, but such a Martyrdom as I take Delight in.* The Duke, not imagining that a Queen of Spain's Heart was capable of being touch'd by any thing below a Crown'd Head, affected not to understand the Meaning of this Paper, and read it with the usual Coolness of a Spaniard. The Queen, who observ'd him with a Lover's Eyes, highly provok'd at his Coldness, snatch'd the Paper from him with Scorn, saying, *Get you gone, Sir, and be sure you don't forget, Domine, non sum dignus *; Lord, I am not worthy.*

Neither Rank nor Restraint can secure a Heart against the Power of Love: All the Jealousy and Precautions of the Spaniards only hasten the Moment in which it becomes a Slave. But what must surprise thee, my dear *Monceca*, is, that, notwithstanding this jealous Temper, and the Severity of the *Etiquette*, there was an establish'd Custom at Court, before *Philip V.* permitting the Noblemen

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to

* *Memoirs of the Court of Spain, by Mademoiselle d'Aunoy, Part II. Pag. 222.*

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to cajole the Queen's Maids of Honour, which the *Spaniards* call *Galanteur*, not excluding the married Men, who were allowed to come under their Windows, and converse with them by their Fingers; a Language invented by Love to make amends for the Constraint People lie under in Countries where they are not at Liberty to explain themselves but by Glances and Signs.

Reconcile, if thou can'st, the ridiculous Custom of the *Galanteur* with the chaste Ceremonial of the *Etiquette*. Though the *Spanish* Nobility, since *Philip V.*'s Accession, have thrown off the ridiculous Impertinences which they consecrated with the Name of the *Court Ceremonial*, yet they would resume them with the same Facility as they dropt them, were it not for the great Number of Foreigners, *French*, *Italians*, *Flemings*, &c. with which this Court swarms; and though it seems now to resemble that of *France* more than any other, yet the Leaven of the *Spanish* Gravity still sticks to it.

'Tis almost impossible for a Native of this Country to differ in Manners from his Ancestors; and this will be evident, when we consider the Hatred which the *Spaniards* bear to all Nations. There was a Time when their Antipathy to the *French* was inexpressible, but now they say 'tis much diminished: For my part, I think there can be no Nations of so different a Genius as the *Spaniards* and *French*. *Charles II.* caused the Necks of two of the Queen's Parrots to be wrung off, because they spoke nothing but *French*. When he went into her Apartment, and found two little Dogs that she was very fond of, *Out, out, ye French Dogs*, said he; *Fuera, fuera, Perros Frances*.

I admire, my dear *Monceca*, the secret Springs of Providence. Who would have told that King, so much an Enemy to the *French*, that his Kingdom
would

would devolve shortly to a Prince of that Nation? Heaven sometimes sports with the Ill-will of weak Mortals; it sees their Schemes, and laughs at their Projects. Princes are but mere simple Men with the Supreme Being. He looks upon them in the Rank of his other Creatures, and their Credit is often less than that of some Sages who have made Virtue the Rule of their Desires and Actions.

Consider, my Friend, the Bounds which the Almighty has set to the Ambition of Princes, who were for turning the World upside down. When he had not decreed it so, he stopp'd them in the Midst of their Career, and, in the Twinkling of an Eye, destroyed and overturned all their proposed Grandeur. An unhappy Instance of this we may see in the Fate of *Charles XII.* of *Sweden*, the modern *Alexander*, ready to crush the *Muscovite*; but Providence turn'd the Scale, his Glory vanished like a Shadow in an Instant, and passed like a Dream. This King, the Conqueror of a Crowd of Enemies, and who made Presents of Crowns, became a Wanderer and a Fugitive, obliged to seek for Refuge among *Barbarians*; nothing remain'd of his past Grandeur, but the melancholy Remembrance of it.

Lewis XIV. was more than once upon the Point of accomplishing his ambitious Views, and of destroying that Balance of Power which had cost so much Pains to settle among the Princes of *Europe*; and, had he dy'd immediately after the Treaty of *Nimeguen*, the World would have been apt to conclude, that he must have effected his Designs: But he survived that glorious Peace; and the same Hand, that had almost render'd him Master of *Europe*, brought him to the very Brink of Ruin. When his Enemies were so intoxicated with their good Fortune, as to ascribe to themselves what was owing to a superior Cause, Providence gave the Scale

a Turn at *Denain*, and put Things almost upon their first Footing: So that, after a ten Years War, both Parties found themselves where they began.

It diverts me to see certain Politicians foretelling, twenty or thirty Years before-hand, the Rise or Fall of a Nation. By their positive way of Speaking, one would be apt to imagine, that the Supreme Being had imparted the Secrets of Heaven to them, and allowed them to open the Book in which is enter'd the Fate of States and Empires; whereas common Experience teaches us, that the Death of one Prince, the Marriage of another, a Confessor, a Mistress, in short, a Trifle, a nothing, defeats all the vain Conjectures and false Reasonings of these pretended Politicians.

All *Europe* was of Opinion, for a certain Time, that the House of *Bourbon* could not avoid succumbing to that of *Austria*; and who could have judg'd otherwise in the Reign of *Charles V.* almost Master of all *Europe*? But if this Prince was to return again to the Land of the Living, how would he be surpris'd? *What's become*, would he say, of my Kingdom of Spain? The Answer would be, *A Prince of the Bourbon Family possesses it. And Franche Comté, my Favourite Province, what's become of it? Why truly the French have got hold of it, as well as of Alsace, and a Part of Hainault and Flanders. And the Kingdoms of Naples and Sicily, what happy Man gives them Laws? Another Prince of the House of Bourbon, would the Answer be. And besides these Losses which your Descendants have sustain'd, Holland, and six other Provinces, converted themselves into Commonwealths a little after your Death. This being the Case, would Charles V. say, my Descendants sure must be all cut off. Far from it, 'twould be reply'd, they subsist still, and make as good a Figure now in Europe as ever they did. How is that possible? wou'd he cry out.*

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out. *Why thus; — Your Successors are Masters of Tuscany, of the Dutchies of Parma, Placentia and Milan; so that you see what they possess in Italy, is, at least, equal to what you had there. In lieu of Spain, which you had, in some measure, dismember'd from the other Estates of your Family, by dividing your Inheritance, they have all Hungary, Transylvania, and a Part of Wallachia. Those Kingdoms which border upon one another, and join to Austria, form, including Bohemia, Silesia and Moravia, one of the most magnificent Monarchies in the World, and, put together, are not at all inferior to the dispers'd States which you possess'd.*

I am convinced, my dear *Monceca*, that, were *Charles V.* to hear all this, he would be fully persuaded 'tis with Empires as with Money; and that the Supreme Being has decreed that they should have a Sort of Circulation, passing into different Families, and often into those which, to Appearance, had the least Pretensions to them.

Let you and me, my Friend, not pretend to determine of future Events; and be firmly persuaded, that the Ways of Providence are past finding out.

*Madrid, *****.*





LETTER CVIII.

AARON MONCECA to ISAAC ONIS.

THERE's a greater Variety of Languages spoke at *Amsterdam*, than of different Religions, though the Number of opposite Sects be very great in this City. This Diversity of Idioms puts me often in mind of that mad Undertaking of the Tower of *Babel*.

If we should admit of the Opinion generally received, and founded upon the Scriptures, the *Hebrew*, or the Language of our ancient Patriarchs, was universal before the Children of *Noah* fell upon the mad Attempt of erecting that Tower. Yet this Opinion, how probable soever, is not universally received. Several Authors pretend, that what *Moses* says of the Confusion of Tongues, is to be no otherwise understood than of the Misunderstanding amongst Men, so rash as to think of rearing up an Edifice contrary to the Will of God. These Authors support their Opinion from the Practice of the Orientals, who, after the Dispersion of Nations, made use of different Dialects rather than Languages; adding, that, without a miraculous Confusion of Tongues, the Dispersion of the People, the Establishment of Empires and Republicks, the Diversity of Laws and Customs, the Commerce of Nations already separated, might occasion an Alteration in the Language *.

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* See Father *Lami's* Rhetorick, or the Art of Speaking, Lib. I. Cap. XV. Page 79.

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The Manner in which the most of Languages have been form'd, by being derived from one another, is an Argument that makes for this Opinion. The *Greeks*, who, in all Appearance, were a Colony of *Egyptians* and *Phanicians*, insensibly alter'd the Language of their Ancestors; and the *Greek* Tongue was form'd, by Degrees, upon the Ruins of the *Egyptian*, which the *Greeks* totally forgot. All the different Idioms of the *Persians*, *Scythians*, and Eastern Nations, resemble one another, and seem to flow from the *Hebrew* as their common Source. We daily see new Languages starting up, and others lost, or, at least, declining; and it may very well be, that the first Difference that crept into a Language, happen'd in the same Way as we observe daily.

In the *French*, we have an authentick Proof of the Manner how the Languages grow and decay insensibly. There's no Doubt but that the *French* now spoke comes from that which was the Language five hundred Years ago; but if the People of those Days were to appear again upon the Stage, they would as little understand a *Parisian* of *St Dennis's* Street as he would them.

But 'tis not in the *French* Language alone that this total Change has happen'd; many others have had the same Fate. *Quintilian* affirms, that the Language of his Time was so different from that which the primitive *Romans* spoke, that the Priests understood little or nothing of the Hymns which the first Priests sang to their Deities*.

Far from proving demonstrably, that all, or, at least, the principal Languages were form'd at the Time of the Confusion of *Babel*, we are very uncertain what Language was spoke at that Time. A good many People differ from the common Opinion, which gives the Preference to the *Hebrew*.

Whole

* *Quint. Instit. Orat. Pag. 11.*

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Whole Nations claim the Preheminence; the *Egyptians*, the *Ethiopians*, the *Chinese*, and even the *Greeks*, who were ignorant of their Origin, believed their Language to be as ancient as any other. A *Greek* Author * affirms, very confidently, that Man, springing out of the Earth as Herbs in a Field, and Frogs in a Pond, and by consequence born in different Parts of the World, form'd themselves into different Societies, who invented each their own Language. That it must be Folly with a Witness, to pretend that Men sprout forth in one Night, as Mushrooms in a Garden, I readily grant; but the Uncertainty which the *Greeks* were under about the Origin of Mankind, and the Difference of Language, made them give in to so extravagant an Opinion †.

An Author ‡, whose Works were printed at *Venice* many Years ago, seem'd to favour the Opinion of the ancient *Greeks*. 'Tis true, he did not make Men spring out of the Earth, because such a System would not have been very well relish'd at that Time of Day; but he maintain'd that *Adam* spoke *Greek*: And a learn'd *French* Rhetorician, who has handled that Matter the best of any Author I know, speaks in the following Manner: *The Proofs which Ericus brings (says he) are, that as soon as the first Man open'd his Eyes, he admir'd the Beauty of God's Works, and cry'd out, O! Consequently he bit upon the Greek Σ, and afterwards the Ε, when, upon Eve's being taken out of the Man's Side, he cry'd out, Ε, Ε. He further says, That Adam's First-born, crying at his Birth, pronounced distinctly,*

* *Diodorus of Sicily.*

† The politeſt *Greeks* were of that Opinion, and really believed, that they were all born in the Country where they dwelt, and had been produced out of the Earth like Insects; for which Reason they assumed the vain Title of *Indigenæ*. See Father *Lami's* Art of Speaking, Lib. I. Cap. XV. Pag. 77.

‡ *John Peter Ericus.*

strictly, אָאָאָ; and the second, who squeak'd, אָאָאָ. By such Arguments he pretends to prove, that the Greek Language is as natural as a certain Singing is to a particular Species of Birds §.

Is it possible, my dear *Isaac*, that Men of Learning, or those who profess to study, can publish such Extravagancies? I might prove, by this Author's own way of Reasoning, had I a mind to it, that the Language of the *Laplanders*, or that of the *Caribbees*, is the most ancient. I might easily find, in *Adam's* first Actions, enough to make me imagine that the first Sounds which he articulated were very odd: But I would gladly know of this Author, who had reveal'd to him that *Adam*, upon his first opening his Eyes and viewing the wonderful Works of Creation, cry'd not rather A than O. This first Vowel denotes a greater Astonishment than the other, is form'd by opening the Mouth, and commonly falls from us when we're struck with Admiration, whereas O is a Sound not so proper to express our Surprise *. Such silly Stuff makes me laugh, and methinks I'm reading *Moliere's* Play, where Mr *Jourdain*, upon getting his first Grammar Lesson, cries out, *Aw! the Wonder of Wonders* †!

How ridiculous soever this Notion, of *Adam's* crying O! upon his seeing the Wonders of the Creation, may be, yet it comes far short of that which sounds the I, or Iota of the *Greeks*, upon the squeaking Voice of his second Child. The printing and publishing such silly Stuff with such an Air of Assurance, is seconding the Impertinence of those Authors who first broach'd them to impose upon the Credulous, and are scarce sufferable, except in such a Book as *Rabelais*. Wou'd
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§ Father *Lami's* Art of Speaking, Lib. I. Cap. XV.

* *Aaron Monceca* must mean the French a, which sounds like aw.

† *Bourgeois Gentilhomme*, a Comedy of *Moliere*.

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it not be better fairly to own our Ignorance of a Thing, than to endeavour to persuade People that we know it, when we can give no satisfactory Proofs?

I believe, my dear *Isaac*, that every rational Man must honestly confess, that he is very uncertain what Language *Adam* spoke; and that, nevertheless, it may be probably conjectured to have been the *Hebrew* rather than any other. After all, of what Advantage wou'd it be, were it evident that the Confusion of *Babel* only affected the Understandings of Men then existing; and that what is said of the Origin of Languages, must be understood in this Sense? 'Tis enough, for our Information, to know that, before the Dispersion of the Nations, there was but one Language, and that all other were form'd afterwards. For as to the Opinion of *Diodorus* of *Sicily*, and some Atheistical Philosophers of our Days, who pretend that Men sprung from the Earth, and form'd divers Languages the very Moment they began to exist, according as they ranged themselves into different Societies, 'tis an absurd Error that flows from their abominable Principles; for 'tis more than probable, that if Men had not understood one another the Moment they were created, instead of forming themselves into Societies, they would have got to the Woods, and wander'd like other Animals, without endeavouring, by common Consent, to attach certain Ideas to certain Sounds.

Whatever Atheists may pretend, Recourse must be had to the Divine Being for the Origin of the first Language taught to *Adam*, or, at least, infused into him, with the other Gifts that he bestow'd; but I would not, by this, assert that our first Parent received universal Knowledge from God: I'm rather of Opinion, that the Supreme Being
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gave him only such Knowledge as was necessary for his regular Conduct.

If the Supreme Being was not the Source from whence flow'd the first Language that Men spoke, how could they, springing up like Flowers in a Meadow or Garden, communicate their Ideas, assemble and agree together about such and such Things necessary to the forming of a Language, of which none of them had the least Idea? Is it not more likely, that they would rather have endeavoured to satisfy their irregular Appetites, than to form that surprising Academy which the Atheists compose of Men who knew no Sound that could serve to communicate their Ideas? God (says one of the most eminent and most rational of the Philosophers *) *having made Man a sociable Creature, not only inspired him with a Desire, and made it necessary for him, to live with those of his own Species, but, for this Purpose, gave him the Faculty of Speech to serve as the chief Instrument, and the common Band of that Society. Wherefore it is that Man's Organs are naturally framed in a Manner proper to form articulate Sounds, which we call Words. But this was not sufficient to form Language; for Parrots, and several other Birds, may be train'd up to form articulate and pretty distinct Sounds, and yet those Animals are no ways capable of Language. It was therefore necessary, that, besides articulate Sounds, Man should be capable of using those Sounds as Signs of internal Conceptions, and to establish them as so many Tokens of the Ideas which we have in the Mind, to the end that they might, by such Means, be communicated to others; and thus Men might communicate their Thoughts to one another.*

This

* Locke's Philosophical Essay on human Understanding, Lib. III, Chap. I. Pag. 222.

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This is, my dear *Isaac*, what we are to stick to. Reason and the Light of Nature convince us of the Justness of this Reasoning; and nothing, I believe, urged to the contrary, can possibly shake it. Nevertheless, as there is no Opinion, how evident soever it may appear to be, that may not admit of Difficulties, which may escape those who are so far prepossess'd in its Favour that they don't discern them, I shall be obliged to thee to give me thy Opinion. I shall think mine the better founded, when I know that it has thy Approbation; and if thou think'st that I judge wrong, I shall endeavour to throw off Prejudice, and listen to thy Reasons, being satisfied that none knows better how to persuade, a Gift only bestow'd upon few Persons. A great many People have the Art of pinching their Adversaries, without affecting their Minds. A Regent of a College, with the Arms of Syllogism and Enthymem, pushes hard upon his Enemy, and claims the Privilege of abusing Words to perplex Reason, and, from Argument to Argument, still keeping up to the Rules, he finally comes to establish the greatest Absurdities without being, however, able to convince those with whom he disputes. The Mind cannot away with Arguments which it is sensible are false, though it cannot explain the Fallacy. This Method of Argumentation, so much in Esteem with the *Nazarene* Doctors, is much more proper to corrupt the Understanding than to improve it; and indeed we see a great many Persons who, without Study, reason in a more clear and distinct Manner than the Professors of Philosophy.

'Tis not to the Ignorance of Logick that we are to ascribe the Defects that we observe in most Mens way of Reasoning, but rather to the Deficiency of Ideas, to their Falsity and Obscurity, to the bad Principles which they have imbib'd, and to the Prejudices

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judices with which they are tainted. The more or less they're touch'd with these Failings, in proportion are their Reasonings good or bad.

Farewel, my dear Friend, be happy and content, and let me hear from thee.

*Amsterdam, *****.*



LETTER CIX.

JACOB BRITO to AARON MONCECA.

I AM now going, my dear *Monceca*, to lay open a monitrous Scene of Horrors, and to draw the Picture of that barbarous *Inquisition*, nourish'd with the Blood of our Brethren, and several unhappy *Nazarenes*, who have had the Misfortune to incur the Displeasure of some Monks. Don't imagine that Spite or Envy guides my Pencil, or that I shall dip it in blacker Colours than the Piece requires, but only trace out what I have learned from several *French, Germans and English*, who have been melancholy Spectators of the bloody Executions order'd by this Monkish Senate, directed by the *Furies*, conducted by Avarice, and supported by Superstition.

When an *Auto de Fe*, i. e. a Decree or Sentence in Matters of Faith, is pronounced by the *Inquisition*, a large Scaffold is erected in the great Square. People of all Ranks flock to see this terrible Spectacle as to a solemn Feast, and even the King, Queen, Ladies, Embassadors, and, in short, all

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the Court are present; so that the Balconies and Windows are hired to good Purpose on those Occasions.

The *Inquisitor's* Chair is a sort of Tribunal raised higher than the King's. Opposite to this Throne an Altar is erected, upon which the *Nazarenes* offer, to the Deity, the Blood of those Victims whom they are going to sacrifice. After a few Ceremonies and Prayers, the *Grand Inquisitor* descends from his Amphitheatre in his *Pontificalibus*, and, after bowing to the Altar erected to Avarice and Cruelty, mounts the King's Throne, followed by some of the Officers of the *Inquisition*; and the Prince standing up, with the Constable of *Castile* at his Side, who holds the Royal Sword erect, swears to observe the Oath then read by a Member of the Royal Council; an Oath by which he is obliged to authorize all the Actions of the *Inquisition*.

This done, the Wretches condemn'd to be tortured are brought to the Place of Execution, and carry'd in Procession round the Square. Those who are not sentenced to die, but condemn'd to cruel Prisons, wear a *Sanbenito*, which is a large Scapulary of yellow Cloth with a St *Andrew's* Cross painted red. The unhappy Creatures who are to be burnt, have long grey colour'd Robes full of painted Flames; and they who refuse to turn *Nazarenes* wear the Effigies and Pictures of Devils, besides a sort of Scapulary upon which is written *Fuego rebuelto*, i. e. *Consuming Fire*.

The *Grandeos* of *Spain*, and the principal Nobility, personate the Sheriff's Men at these frightful Ceremonies, for they conduct the pretended Criminals, who are to be burnt, to the Stake bound with strong Ropes. Thus Superstition and Bigotry make of the haughty *Don Diego's*, *Don Sancho's*,

Sancho's, and *Don Pedro's*, not only Slaves to the Monks, but *Aid de Camps* to the Hangmen.

To augment the Misery of these unfortunate Martyrs doom'd to the Rage of Flames, a Parcel of ignorant cruel Friars plague them with stupid Arguments and injurious Language. At length they are thrown headlong into the Fire prepared for them; and 'tis upon such Occasions, my dear *Monceca*, that the Constancy of our Nation triumphs. Several of the faithful Descendants of the ancient *Israelites* throw themselves into the Flames, others burn their Feet and Hands before they leap into the burning Pile, and, preserving all the Coolness of that illustrious *Roman*, *Mutius Scevola*, while his Hand was consuming in the Flame, sing Praises to the God of *Israel* in the Midst of Tortures.

The barbarous *Spaniards* are not in the least moved at these dismal Scenes of Horror; neither Age, nor Sex, nothing can touch such Hearts of Rock. A *Nazarene* Author, whom they have no Reason to suspect, speaks thus: *Among the Jews that were burnt, there was a young Girl extremely beautiful, scarce seventeen Years of Age, who happening to be on the Side where the Queen was, address'd her Majesty for a Pardon. "Great Queen (said she) will not your Royal Presence make some Alteration in my Misfortune? Consider my Youth, and that what I am to suffer for, is a Religion which I suck'd in with my Mother's Milk. The Queen turn'd away her Eyes, and seem'd to be under great Concern, yet durst not mention the saving her. *"*

What Enchantment, my dear *Monceca*, must it be that has blinded Men so as to render them guilty of such Cruelties? Can a Nation be so abandon'd to its Prejudices, as not to make use of Reason, and not to abolish Executions so contrary to

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* *Memoirs of the Court of Spain*, by M. d'Aunoy, Part II. P. 66.

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the Law of Nature? The *Nazarene* Monks must be very pernicious Magicians thus to confound the human Understanding, and to colour the blackest Crimes with the Title of Virtues. Pray think what an unlimited Power they must have in *Spain*, since a Queen dares not so much as ask the Pardon of a young Girl, guilty of no other Crime but because she believed the Religion that she had been taught from her Infancy. The Authority of the Throne must ply to the Monastick Power; a Monster, hatch'd by Superstition, that makes even Crown'd Heads tremble.

But what is most monstrous in these bloody Tragedies is, the *Roman* Pontiff's granting Indulgencies of an hundred Years to those who conduct and throw those unhappy Creatures into the Flames, and fifty Years to those who are only Spectators. O Heavens! what Horror, what Abomination, is this! What! shall the most crying and detestable Crimes be the surest Means of leading us to Heaven! Avarice, Cruelty, Fury and Rage, are the Badges of *Spanish Nazarenism*; and the *Nazarenes*, who, in *France* and *Germany*, glory in their Abhorrence of Blood, have, in the *Inquisition* Countries, Brethren that consecrate Murder under the Cloke of Religion, and make their Cruelties an essential Article of Faith!

The next Day after those unhappy Creatures are burnt, is a grand Festival. The Monks go in Procession to the principal Church; and before them are carried, as Trophies of Victory, the Pictures of the Condemn'd, on which are these Words, *Morreo quemado por Hereje relapso*. i. e. *I die for relapsing into Heresy*. Under those who persist in declaring their Innocence is written, *Por Hereje convicto negativo*, i. e. *for denying their Heresy after Conviction*; and under those who have adher'd to their
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their Religion, *Por Hereje contumas*, i. e. for obstinate Heresy.

All this Triumph does not fully satisfy the Fury of the Monks; it extends to the *Manes* of those who have been dead many Years. They carry about in certain Boxes, call'd *Carocha's*, the Bones of People dug out of the Ground, and brought to a Trial after Death. Thus a Man's being dead and buried is no Security against the Hatred of the Monks, for they persecute their Enemies beyond the Grave. But 'tis not in *Spain* alone where such Sacrileges have been perpetrated; in several other Countries the like Excesses have been committed, and Tombs violated, upon Pretence of Religion.

Without ocular Demonstration one would scarce believe what an immense Power the Monks have acquired in the Countries where the *Inquisition* is settled. Reason is shock'd when we are told, that there have been Men so foolish and weak as to submit to the despotick Power of the Monks, to strip themselves of their natural and civil Rights, and to deprive the ordinary Tribunals of their legal Jurisdiction, in favour of new ones compos'd of the Scum of the Earth.

The Foundation of the Power which the Monks have acquir'd, was owing to the most refin'd Politicks. A pretended Zeal to destroy our Nation, and certain *Nazarenes* whom they treated as Hereticks, served as a Pretence. At first, the *Inquisition* was to be exercis'd only in one single Case: But the silly People were blind enough not to see that this single Case included many others; for what Actions, good or bad, are not brought within the Sphere of Religion? *Judaism, Heresy, the Observance of all the Nazarene Precepts, Swearing, Crimes against divine Worship, Bigamy, Sodomy, robbing of Churches, insulting the Priests and Monks,*

Sorcery, and, in short, so many other Things that are link'd with the *Nazarene* Faith.

The People, awak'd at length out of their Lethargy, saw, but too late, the exorbitant Power which they had given to the Monks, and yet they had neither the Courage nor Resolution to take it from them: They kept the Chains which they had put about their own Necks, and became the chief Instruments of the Tyranny under which they groan'd. In fine, the Sovereign Pontiffs, with the Assistance of Bulls, and those very Monks whose Authority they intended to support in order to establish their own, brought the People at last to a Belief, that to give the Clergy an unlimited Power was a Thing necessary to Religion; so that the superstitious *Spaniards*, the ignorant *Portuguese*, and the fanatick *Italians*, not only consecrated the villainous Tribunal of the *Inquisition* in their own Countries, but made Attempts to have it established among their Neighbours, but they were too well acquainted with this infernal Court to submit to it. *Spain* lost a Part of the *Netherlands* for endeavouring to establishing it there; and *France* too wise then to suffer such an Encroachment upon its Privileges, vigorously opposed all the Attempts of the Sovereign Pontiffs.

The Tribunal of the *Holy Office* (as they term it) is so abhor'd by several *Nazarene* Nations, that its very Name makes them tremble. A *Jew*, whose Father has been burnt, and who, by Flight, has, himself, escaped the like Fate, is not more shock'd at the terrible Name of the *Inquisition*, than a Counsellor of the Parliament of *Paris* is, when he hears the terrible Word but pronounced; and there's not a petty Judge of the least Country Village who would not chuse to suffer the worst of Misfortunes, rather than to be subjected to any Jurisdiction except that of secular Judges, or to
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own any other Master but his King, or other Executioners of his Will but the Parliaments.

Whatever Credit the Monks had for a long Time in *France*, and particularly during the *League* when they were supported by *Spain*, yet they never durst openly attempt to set up the *Inquisition* in that Kingdom, though they secretly endeavour'd it: They met with such Opposition, that they plainly saw the Attempt must be attended with the entire Ruin of their Credit, instead of augmenting it.

And indeed, all the different States of the Kingdom are concern'd to prevent the Establishment of this unjust Tribunal. The King, who is absolute in his Kingdom, would have a Rival in the *Grand Inquisitor*. The twelve Parliaments would dwindle to little Seneschal Jurisdictions. The Forces would be more under the Command of the Monks than of their General Officers. Bishops would have Competitors in simple Priests for Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction, and the Clergy, as well as the common People, would become Slaves to the Monks, and the Victims of their Avarice and Ambition. The *French* Nobility, who have been us'd to despise the Monkish Race, and to look upon them in general as the Excrement of Mankind, should then think themselves very happy to be admitted into the Number of the *Familiars del sancto Officio*, i. e. *the Familiars of the holy Office*. And, in short, the Dukes and Peers would be intitled to an hundred Years Indulgence by conducting the poor unhappy Wretches to the Stake, and have the Glory of being the Valets of the Executioners.

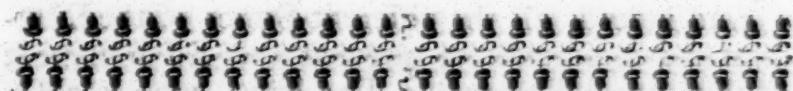
There's no Fear now, my dear *Monceca*, that the *Inquisition* can ever get Footing into any States where it is not already established. Its Horrors are too well known, and I am certain that there's
not

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not an *European*, who has the least Grain of Sense, but would rather turn *Mussulman* than be subject to a cruel *Dominican* Friar, or such other implacable Persecutor.

Farewel, my Friend; and may it never be thy Fate to live in Countries where Wisdom and Justice are not as well established as that in which thou now art.

*Madrid, *****.*



LETTER CX.

AARON MONCECA to ISAAC ONIS.

IN a Letter which I wrote thee not long since, I mention'd the vast Number of Printers and Bookfellers at *Amsterdam*. In proportion there are as many in the other Towns. Thou'lt, no doubt, conclude, that there must be in this Country great Plenty of Authors to supply so many Presses, and to furnish the Bookfellers with new Books, which they daily advertise. Such a Conjecture is very just; for Writers are almost as numerous here as the Statues were in ancient *Rome*, which exceeded the Number of Inhabitants in ordinary Towns *.

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* *Hæc statuas primum Tuscis in Italia invenisse referuntur, quæ amplexa posteritas gens parum populum arti dedit quam natura praeceperat.* Cassidor. Var. Lib. VII. Cap. XV. &c. The *Tuscans* are reported to have been the first Inventors of those Statues which their Posterity were fond of, that the Number which was carved was almost equal to that of the Souls which were born.

Were we to assemble all the stupid Scribblers which swarm in *Holland*, a Colony might be formed void of good Sense and Judgment.

Thou'lt be at a Loss to account for this Multitude of Authors, and why the Fury of Writing rages more in this Country than any other. Several concurring Circumstances contribute to maintain and augment the Number of those Paper-dawbers. Some are turn-coat Monks, who, having abandon'd their Convents, and being reduced to Poverty, fancy that 'tis as easy to make a Book as a dull Sermon. Others, hearing daily of new Books printed, turn Authors by Infection. The Itch of Scribbling, in this Country, is a Distemper as infectious as that of Fanaticism. Bad Writers may be compared to the *Convulsionaries* of *Paris*, a Spirit of Enthusiasm possesses both alike, without being able to give any rational Account of the Cause. The Booksellers are very easy whether a Book be good or bad, if it is but new, they seldom fail to get the Impression disposed of, by means of some important Title under which it appears in the News-papers. They are concern'd in some one or other of the many *Journals* that are publish'd, in which a pompous Character is surely given to the most wretched Performance: And this is a Thing which the Publick cannot find Fault with, because they know, long since, that the Design of these *Journals* is no other than to depreciate what is published by certain Booksellers and extol the Copies of others.

When a Book happens to be so bad that only a Part of the Edition can be sold, 'tis advertis'd a second Time, about a Year after, under another Title, with the Addition of some *Preface* as bad as the Work itself, and, by the Help of this Trick, the remaining Copies are sold off. In short, there are a thousand Ways, in *Holland*, by which the

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Booksellers get rid of stupid Books: Those which won't sell in the Shops, by Retail, are sold, by the Lump, to Butter Women, Grocers, and Snuff Shops. In all which Places there are Plenty of Works that have been publish'd within these ten or twelve Years; so that if we except six or seven Authors, for the most part Natives of *Holland*, there are few Writers but may there pick up a large Collection of their own Performances.

It would be altogether needless to enlarge upon those Abortives in the *Republick of Letters*, their Names being fully as contemptible as their Works. I shall rather endeavour to give thee an Idea of some Authors who deserve to be mention'd: *Boerbaave*, 's *Gravesande* and *Vitrarius* are great Men. *Musembroek* has made a fine Collection of Physical Experiments; and thou knowest that *Barbeyrac* is a good Translator. There are also in the Academies of these Provinces some other Persons distinguish'd for their Learning and Probity, and among the Ministers and Clergy not a few Men of Merit. I have often heard *Saurin* highly commended for an excellent Preacher. But the Number of these Authors is so small in proportion to the others, that there's no Comparison; though, to do the *Dutch* Justice, it must be own'd that the greatest Part of the bad Writers are Foreigners. Several of them pretend to write in *French*, but, when their Books appear in *France*, People are strangely surpris'd to find the *Gascon*, or *Norman* Jargon in every Page, and in some of them such a Mixture of Idioms, that there's no guessing what Language they write in unless it be a sort of *Frenchified Greek*.

'Tis much to be fear'd, my Friend, that this Crowd of bad Authors will entirely corrupt the Taste not only of the Inhabitants of this Country,
but

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but also of most People who apply themselves to Reading.

I look upon the Shops of certain Booksellers, as upon the Laboratories of noted Chymists, who make up Philters to disturb the human Understanding, and to poison the Nourishment which it might draw from good Books. In place of examining Books in *France* before they go to Press, to know if the Authors have said any thing to expose the Monks, I would have them revised in *Holland*, to know if there was nothing against good Sense, and that they would do the same Justice to Mankind that they do to a Parcel of Lazy-bones, whose Profession an ancient Superstition has render'd respectable. A Work is not to be printed at *Paris* if it treats freely of the Court of *Rome*, or of Indulgences, or should speak favourably of *Arnaud*. But should they not much rather endeavour to stop the Progress of innumerable Treatises that spoil the Taste, banish good Sense, and confound Reason?

I'm surpris'd that the *Dutch*, who lose no Opportunity of doing what may contribute to the Benefit of civil Society, have not made this Reflection. Perhaps indeed they have; but the Fear of introducing a Custom, which, in the Event, might strike at that Liberty so dear to them, has prevented their putting a Stop to those Books, not only pernicious to the *Republick of Letters*, but also to all Mankind: For the *Dutch* are Lovers of the Sciences, have a very great Esteem for Men of Merit, and receive them courteously, of whatever Nation they may be. *Bayle*, and several *Frenchmen*, have been caress'd by the chief Members of the Republick. We observe in *Holland* what has been seen in few other Countries for near 1700 Years. The City of *Rotterdam* honour'd *Erasmus* so much, that his Statue was erected in
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the publick Square; and it was certainly rendering to the Merit of Learning a just Regard, to erect such a Monument to an able Writer. This Statue seems to have changed both its Form and Matter, in proportion as the Republick flourish'd. At first it was only of Wood, erected in 1540; afterwards of Stone, in 1567; and lastly of Brass, in 1622, which remains to this Day: And should we live to another Century, perhaps we might see one of Gold. But, what's surprising, the neighbouring City *Delft*, not less honour'd by the celebrated *Grotius*, has erected no Statue to that great Man.

When I begin to reflect on the Manner how this State was form'd, I can't forbear to admire what Industry, supported by the Love of Liberty, is capable of doing. A floating, uncultivated Country, and which scarce produced any thing, in a short Time becomes the Magazine and Centre of all the Riches in the Universe.

None but such laborious People as the *Dutch* were capable of dispossessing the Sea of so much Ground, and forcing that boisterous Element to recoil, by the Means of Dikes, of which none but a Nation so powerful as they could support the Expence, being obliged, for the Safety of their Country, to keep them constantly in good Repair. The Sea may be very properly called a Nurse to the *Dutch*, but it may likewise bear the Title of their greatest Enemy; for in the Year 1574 * it washed away one hundred and twelve Houses of the Village of *Scheveling*, the Church of which is now close by the Sea, whereas formerly it stood in the Middle of the Place.

The continual Repairs, and other Expences, to which the Government is liable, occasion heavy Taxes in *Holland*. They who are acquainted with the State of publick Affairs, don't in the least mur-

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* *Misson's Travels into Holland.*

mur at them; and few Malecontents (those odious and contemptible Creatures, who seek to raise their Fortune upon the Ruins of the State, and always love to fish in troubled Waters) are to be met with in this Country. Every Individual, happy in the full Enjoyment of Liberty, contributes cheerfully to the Exigencies of the State, and looks upon the Republick as a tender Mother whom he is obliged to assist.

The greatest Fault that I can find in the *Dutch*, is an extravagant Fondness of their Children, which blinds them to such a Degree, that they neither give them sufficient Correction nor Education. 'Twere to be wish'd, that their Complaisance, in this Respect, was something less. The *Lacedemonians* train'd up their Youth in a very different Manner: They made them go through a very rigid Discipline, and form'd them betimes to all sort of Exercises, instilling into them such high Ideas of Virtue and Constancy, that, upon a certain Occasion, one who held a Flambeau, suffer'd it to burn his Hand rather than that he should interrupt the Ceremony *.

Youth is the only proper Season for giving the first Impressions, and forming the Manners, the Faults whereof, by Habit render'd familiar and common, are not easily corrected by Age and Reason. 'Tis next to an Impossibility entirely to cure the *Italians* of Superstition, being, as it were, fed from their very Cradles with a Parcel of Chime-

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ra's,

* *Cicero*, speaking of the Resolution, Constancy and Courage, of the *Lacedemonian* Youth, says, that, in fighting, Death only could separate them, which they prefer'd to acknowledging themselves vanquish'd.

Adolescentium grezes Lacedamone vidimus ipsi, incredibili contentione certantes, pugnis, calcibus, unguibus, morfu denique, ut exanimarentur, prius quam se victos faterentur.

Cicero Tuscul. an. Quest. Lib. V. Cap. XXVI.

ra's, which they believe to be as true as Gospel. In like manner the *Dutch* find it very difficult to shake off a sort of Self-love, and Fondness for their own Opinions, which is chargeable upon their Parents, who foolishly indulg'd them in all their youthful Conceits and Humours. People of Distinction indeed are sensible of this Mistake, and seem desirous to take some Care of their Childrens Education; but then the Misfortune is, that they are not very careful in chusing their Preceptors.

One Thing, which no doubt will extremely surprise thee, is, that a Nation so wise and prudent as the *Dutch*, should, for the most part, trust the Education of their Youth to turn-coat Monks, and little saucy Renegado Priests, the Consequence of which may be attended with fatal Inconveniencies, and Repentance when too late. Is it possible, that the Country should produce no Natives capable of an Employment of so great Importance? For my own part, I can't allow myself to think it: But then I consider, on the other hand, that the Madness and Fondness of the Women for every Fool that can affect the fine Gentleman, and the excessive Complaisance of their Husbands, lead them into many gross Mistakes this Way; so that the frivolous is preferr'd to the solid, and the hurtful to what may be of Advantage. The Girls have, in this Respect, the better of the Boys; for the Women to whose Care they are committed, are much better qualified to discharge their Trust.

I design to leave this Country soon, and to go for *Berlin*. From thence I shall proceed to *Hamburg*, where I have some Affairs of Interest to settle with *Isaac Mejo*; and thou may expect to be informed of what I find most remarkable among the *Germans*, a People whom thou knowest better than I, from the frequent Visits which thou formerly made to the *German Courts*, and, by that Means.

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Means, acquired a Knowledge of them, which I can't pretend to. All I beg is, that thou would'st freely tell me if my Remarks are just, and if my Letters are agreeable; that's the whole of my Ambition and Study. I communicated thine to several learned Men when I was in *France*, and they seem'd to be highly pleas'd with them. 'Tis true, indeed, that some Bigots and Monks, who saw them, have, out of the Abundance of their Zeal, dignified thee with the Title of *Heretick*, and *headstrong Jew*; but I think their Approbation should not much affect thee, since what an ancient *Nazarene* Doctor said of the Pagan Priests, may be very well applied to them, *viz. Philosophy and Religion are different Things. Wisdom is the Object of the former, and Heaven of the latter; and the Priest is as little capable of leading you to Wisdom, as the Philosopher is of conducting you to Heaven* *.

Farewel, my Friend. How it rejoices me to think, that the same Road that leads thee to Wisdom, will land thee in Heaven.

*Amsterdam, *****.*

F 2

LETTER



* *Philosophia, & religio Deorum, disjuncta sunt, longèque differunt; siquidem alii sunt professores sapientiæ, per quos utique ad Deos aditur; alique religionis antistites, per quos sapere non dicitur.*



LETTER CXI.

JACOB BRITO to AARON MONCECA.

THE Women in *Spain* are the Prisoners of their Slaves. There's no Country in the World where the Men are so submissive, nor the Ladies any where under such Constraint. Though the Foreigners, who have for some time frequented this Kingdom, have contributed much to change their horrible Captivity into a moderate Slavery, yet they are still watch'd very narrowly. Such as, by their Birth, can have no Access at Court, scarce see any but their Relations and some Monks. Others are more at Liberty, particularly since the *Spanish* Court was so much *Frenchified* as it now is.

You must not imagine that the Vigilance of the *Spanish* Husbands guards their Fronts from the Ensigns of the horn'd Fraternity, so common in other Countries. The Monks here are as kind and charitable as the *Petit-maitres* in *France*, and a *Corde-lie* is a more dangerous Creature than the most accomplish'd Nobleman; he knows how to reduce the most stubborn Lady's Heart, and to deceive the most jealous Husband: His Habit procures him patent Doors, and the spacious Title of Confessor, or Director, furnishes him with a Pretence of being alone with his Mistress as long as he pleases, without the Husband's daring to interrupt

rupt their Conversation, unless he were resolved to draw down upon his Head the Wrath of Heaven, or, which is worse, that of the Monks.

Thou'lt perhaps ask me, how the jealous *Spaniard* can put up with these Monkish Visits? It was equally surprising to me, till at length I came to know that the Force of Prejudice was such in this Nation that Superstition got the better of Jealousy. They either have so much Confidence in the Virtue of these frock'd Gentlemen as to dread no Harm, or look upon the Favour conferred on them by the Monks as something that's sacred and honourable, and a necessary Part of their Religion; and I don't know but that religious Horns have several Indulgencies tack'd to them, in which Case I no longer wonder that a silly *Spaniard* is so zealous to gain them at the Expence of his Forehead, when a Grandee, to get into Favour with the *Inquisition*, thinks it an honourable Employment to drag a *Jew* to the Place of Execution.

'Tis not of Yesterday that People have received, with the greatest Marks of Veneration, Cuckoldom administer'd by their spiritual Guides. Did not the *Pagans* esteem themselves very happy when any of their Gods took it into their Heads to come down and plant Horns upon honest Mens Heads, which they esteem'd more than Crowns. *Amphitrion*, the *Theban* General, thought himself highly honour'd that *Jupiter* made use of his Wife to get a Demi-God *. Perhaps a *Spanish* Bigot is as fond of being the By-blow of some *Augustin* or *Cordelier*, as a *Theban* of springing from a *Pagan* Diety.

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Be-

* "*Alcmena* wore three Moons in her Head-dress, to let the World know that *Jupiter* had made one Night as long as three, that he might enjoy her the longer. This is very singular, says a modern Author: Might she not have been satisfy'd

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Besides the Liberty which the Monks have of visiting the Women, and the Respect which the Husbands bear to them, they fall upon noble Expedients to conceal their Roguery and Intrigues. No Misfortune or bad Accident in Gallantry can disconcert them, they so artfully disguise their Actions that many People are persuaded they are as chaste as *Origen*, tho' not restrain'd by the same Reason.

I was told a merry Story of a *Carmelite*. This Friar was in Love with a very handsome married Woman at *Seville*. The Husband being gone a Journey, the Reverend Father fail'd not to visit his *Dolcinea* every Morning, and his Exhortations were more agreeable to the Laws of Love than to those of *Hymen*; and that he might speak the more commodiously to his Penitent, he went to Bed with her, where he commonly remain'd three long Hours at a Time.

One Morning as he was documentising his Mistress, home comes the Husband, and the poor *Carme* had only Time to put on his Robe, but was forced to leave his Breeches. This Husband happen'd to be none of those who look upon Monkish

"satisfy'd that her Husband's Head was fortify'd with Horn-
"works and Demi-lunes surpassing the Towers of the God-
"dess *Cybilie*.

— *Qualis Berecyntha mater,
Invehitur curru Phrygiæ turrata per urbes †.*

— When in Pomp she makes the *Phrygian* round,
With golden Turrets on her Temples crown'd. *Dryden.*

"What Occasion then had she for three Moons on her Fore-
"head?"

— *Parvoque Alcmena superbit
Hercule, tergemina crinem circumdata Luna †.
Of little Hercules Alcmena proud,
Decks her Locks with triple Moons.*

† *Virg. Æn. Lib. VI. v. 185.* ‡ *Stat. Theban. Lib. VI. v. 188.*

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Monkish Cuckoldom as an effectual Means for the Remission of Sins. While the Monk was thus hurrying on his Frock, the Husband perceived the Breeches, and, with Fury, laid hold of this dumb but convincing Proof, which he lock'd up securely in his Press, and ran to the Convent to make his Complaint to the Superior. *I am resolved, said he, to carry Father Sebastiano's Breeches in Procession, through the whole City, if you don't give me proper and speedy Satisfaction. Be under no Concern about that, said the Superior very gravely, I promise you I will; but, first of all, I must speak to the Father of whom you complain, for common Equity requires that both Parties be heard before Condemnation: Return therefore to your own Habitation, and be assured of ample Satisfaction if your Accusation be well grounded.*

Scarce was the Spaniard's Back turn'd, when Father Sebastiano appear'd: The want of his Breeches made it absolutely needless to deny the Fact; and therefore the Superior, a shrewd old Fox, foreseeing that it would be of very bad Consequence to leave, in the Hands of a jealous Spaniard, such Ensigns of Monkish Incontinence, resolved to have them back at any Rate. *For the future don't be so very lascivious, said he to Father Sebastiano; to strip and get into a Pair of Sheets is a shameful Thing for a Man of your Vigour, and a most grievous Affront put upon the whole Carmelite Order, so famous hitherto in the Feats of Gallantry.*

This short Harangue finish'd, he order'd the whole Convent to march in Procession to the Husband's House, which they did, humming over their Litanies, with their Commander at their Head. To be sure the Spaniard was much surpris'd upon the Arrival of this Frock'd Regiment in this formal Manner, but he soon understood the Meaning of it. *We are come, said the Superior, to clear up your Mistake,*

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Mistake, and to carry back one of the most precious Relicks of our Convent, which Father Sebastiano took from the Vestry without my Order.

As the Spaniard was quite at a Loss to know what was meant by this Relick, *the Breeches*, continued the Superior, *which you have shut up in your Chest of Drawers, and which have given Umbrage, are the very same which the blessed St Raymond de Penafort wore, Father Sebastiano brought them from the Convent that your Wife might kiss them; for, of all Relicks, 'tis the greatest Specifick for Women that importune Heaven for Children.* The Spaniard made a Virtue of Necessity, and, finding that there was neither Room for Complaint nor Revenge, prostrated himself, most respectfully, before the sacred Relick, and broke forth into the following Exclamation. *O holy Breeches! from whose prolifick Virtue may be expected a Posterity as numerous as the Stars in the Firmament, or as the Sand of the Sea, pardon my Blindness, and take pity of my Ignorance! Little did I know that, after having provided for the Infirmities of a great Saint, thou won'dst now so graciously vouchsafe to supply the pressing Demands of our Wives. May all the married Women of this City immediately experience thy powerful Assistance as effectually as mine has.*

The Superior, charm'd with the happy Success of his Stratagem, carried back the holy Relick in Triumph to his Convent; and the superstitious Spaniards, fully convinced of their marvellous Efficacy, have, ever since, paid a particular Devotion to the miraculous Breeches.

There are very few Cases wherein Religion does not serve the Nazarene Monks as a Cloke to their Irregularities; not that they trouble themselves much about Decorum, or avoiding Scandal. The sole Motive of their Constraint is the Fear of losing the good Opinion which the simple Husbands entertain

entertain of them, so that they conceal their Crimes, not because they are ashamed, but that they may the more easily commit them; and indeed it must be allow'd that none excel them in the Art of Diffimulation.

A celebrated *Italian* Preacher *, was another *St Paul* in the Pulpit, but no sooner was out of the Church than he threw off the austere Moralist, and turn'd the Man of Pleasure, not at all nice in the Choice of Mistresses. An easy willing Lass, that knew not how to refuse a kind Offer, was a Queen to our gallant Priest; and had it not been for some Satyrical Expressions in his public Discourses, which drew upon him the Resentment of some powerful Enemies, no Notice would have been taken of his Irregularities. One Day, particularly, as he was preaching at *St Jean de Lateran*, *My dear Brethren*, said he, *I can't tell what to think of those Men who make a Merit in being Members of the Society of Jesus. When he was born, he had no other Companions but an Ox and an Ass. He spent his Life with Scribes and Pharisees, whom he could not convert, and at last dy'd between two Thieves. You would very much oblige me to let me know from which of these three Sorts of Races the Gentlemen of the Society of Jesus have the Honour to spring* †.

The *Jesuites*, as may be easily imagin'd, were highly provok'd with the Preacher's severe Railery, and swore Revenge. Having Intelligence that he frequently went to Houses where 'tis certain he

was

* Fontana Rosa, a Dominican, and a great Enemy of the *Jesuites*.

† *Fratelli carissimi, non so, disse, chi siano costoro, che si pregiano di esser i compagni di Gesù. All'ora che nacque, non hebbo altri compagni che un Bue ed un Asino. Passò la vita trà Farisei e Scribi, i quali mai vollero convertirsi. Morì alla fine in mezzo à due Ladri. Dite-mi, di grazia, Fratelli cari, la compagnia di Gesù d'oggi di da quel di queste tre compagnie deriva?* Sig. Cant. de Quom. Tom. I, Pag. 130.

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was not composing Sermons, they obtain'd an Order from the Governor of *Rome* to the *Barigel* to lay hold of him the first Time they found him in a Bawdy-house, and to lodge him safely in a Jail.

The *Jesuites* kept a sharp Look-out, and the Enemy being gone a marauding, as usual, the *Barigel* had immediate Intelligence, went directly to the House, and knock'd at the Chamber Door; but the Reverend Father, instead of opening, began to talk aloud, as if he did not hear or mind the Knocking. The *Barigel*, grown impatient with waiting, forced the Door with his Foot, and enter'd with his Attendants. But how great was his Surprise to find the Monk with his Beads in his Hand, at the End of which hung more than 200 Medals, and the Priestess of *Venus* devoutly kneeling at his Feet, wrapp'd up in Attention to a Sermon which the cunning Fox was preaching, which made her shed many a Tear, and, sobbing, say, *Indeed, Father, for the future I will reform my sinful Course of Life, and no Temptation shall have the Power to make me continue in so bad a Way.*

The *Barigel* and his Gang, right *Italians* for Superstition, cry'd out, with one Voice, *What a Shame! that good People should be so basely misrepresented!* The Monk, perceiving that now was the Time to turn the Weapons upon his Enemies, made such a pathetick Discourse to the *Barigel*, that he quite forgot his Errand, and return'd to acquaint the Governor with the holy and pious Actions which he had been an Eye Witness of. The *Jesuites* could not shew their Faces, and the Preacher was more in Vogue than before, and had not only Permission to shut himself up with the Curtezans, but also to throw off his Frock upon certain Occasions, that he might entertain them with greater Freedom, if he thought it necessary for their Conversion, and to bring home the more of those stray'd Sheep.

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The *Jesuites* murmur'd at the Privileges granted heir Enemies, but were answer'd, *That it was no more than complying with the Maxims of their Spanish Divines; and that their Fathers Escobar, Sanches, and many others, had often decided those Points* *.

What Opinion thou'lt have of this Preacher's Stratagem I know not, but I can with Truth tell thee, that, in this Country, there happen daily fifty Adventures still more comical; and the *Italian Monks* are Saints, compar'd with the *Spanish*.

Nevertheless, whatever Conveniency a Woman may find in an Intrigue with the Children of *St Dominic*, or *St Francis*; and whatever may be the Reputation of their Abilities in this Part of the World, yet a certain Instinct, born with the Fair Sex, is the Reason that they are never admitted as Gallants, but when a Woman can't conveniently have a Gentleman for her Lover; in which Case she's even obliged to put up with the Friars, and to feed, if I may be allow'd the Expression, on this homely Fare, for want of better Victuals.

The Monks and Gentlemen are very different in their way of making Love. The former have free Access to the Ladies Bed Chambers, where they no sooner are, but begone, Husbands, and leave your better Halves to the pious Exhortations of the Ghostly Fathers; but the latter, poor Simpletons! think themselves mighty happy when they can exercise their Guitar a long Winter Night under their Mistresses Windows. But more of these Inamourato's at some other Time. I shall now conclude this Letter with putting thee in mind what Comfort it must give thee to be in a Country free from Monks and *Inquisitions*.

*Madrid, *****.*

LETTER

* See the *Provincial Letters*, Pag. 101.



LETTER CXII.

AARON MONCECA to ISAAC ONIS.

THE present State of the *Nazarene* Religion has often made me reflect on what it will be four or five hundred Years hence, it being morally impossible but that, in so long a Course of Time, some grand Revolution will bring about a thorough Change.

Nazarenism may be, at this Day, consider'd as a Republick under Convulsions by two different Factions, who are irreconcilable, and can bear no Thoughts but the entire Destruction each of them of the Rival Party. The Creatures of the *Roman* Pontiffs, and their Adversaries, are equally industrious to accomplish their Designs; and 'tis scarce to be imagin'd but some favourable Conjunction will cast up, which one of the two Parties will improve to the Ruin of the other.

When we consider with what Rapidity the Reform'd extended their Power at the Beginning of the Reformation, or, if you will, the Separation of the *Nazarenes*, and examine the Number of Kingdoms and Provinces that have embraced the Opinions of the Protestant Doctors, one would be apt to conclude, that, by Degrees, they would become absolute Masters: But, when we take a View of the Events that have happen'd in *Europe* for an Age past, we're at a Loss what to think of it; we remain under an Uncertainty, which augments

ments upon our endeavouring to clear it up, and Reflections serve only to create new Doubts. The Protestants and Papists have alternately had successful and unhappy Turns. In the Beginning of the last Century, almost one Half of *France* was Protestant, and at this Time *Calvinism* is entirely banish'd from it, which is a considerable Advantage to the Pontiff's Party; but, if they gain Ground on their own Side the Water, they lose on t'other; for the *English* have quite shaken off Popery, and will shortly suppress it in the two Kingdoms that are subject to them *. So far the Mischiefs which the two Parties have done to each other are pretty much upon an Equality, but 'tis not so in *Germany*, where the Protestants seem to have met with a considerable Shock, which may be attended with very bad Consequences. This Blow is given by the Electors of *Saxony*'s changing their Religion. They have, as one may say, laid the Ax to the Root of the Tree, which must of Necessity fall to the Ground; for, in short, my Friend, 'tis a Fact, supported by Experience, that when several Sovereigns continue successively to profess a Religion, sooner or later all their Subjects come into the same way of Thinking. In *Sweden* and *Denmark*, where the Kings have exercised the Protestant Religion without Interruption, there are scarce any Catholics now to be found; and the Case would be the same in *England*, if, after the Reign of Queen *Elizabeth*, there had been no Popish Prince on the Throne: But *James I.* and his Son, rekindled a Fire that was ready to be extinguish'd.

Had *Lewis XIII.* and *Lewis XIV.* been as zealous to extirpate Popery as they were to ruin *Calvinism*, there would actually be fewer Catholics than Protestants in *France*, and perhaps there would

* *Scotland and Ireland.*

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not be one single Nobleman now at Court in the Pope's Interest. 'Tis next to an Impossibility but that, in the Course of four Generations, some Head or other of a Family will sacrifice the Religion of his Ancestors to his Ambition. If the Grándfather does not change, the Father perhaps will, and failing this, the Son, or the Son's Successor. And 'tis certainly paying a great Compliment to Mankind, to imagine, that out of four there's only one capable of doing a mean, base Thing for the Sake of Honours and Riches. All the Philosophers allow, that Men are, in general, more prone to Vice than Virtue. But supposing them more steady and fix'd than they really are, it will always follow that, in the Course of four Generations, some Chief, or Head, in every Family will be entirely sed by ambitious and political Views. *My Prince*, would he say, *believes in the Virtue of Indulgences, and pray where's the great Harm if I should approve of those same Indulgences? Since to be of the Sovereign's Religion is the only Road to Preferment, I should be a very silly Fool not to profess it. By remaining Protestant, I may have, 'tis true, the Pleasure of exposing a Number of Fooleries, which will be never a Bit the less approved of; and what a mighty Advantage this will afford me let any Man judge! Is it not much more adviseable to make those very Fooleries contribute to the Success of my Designs?* Henry IV. who was born to wear a Crown, said, that a Kingdom was well worth a Mass. I, who am by Birth destin'd to high Stations and Honours, set apart for Nobility, do affirm, that a Regiment, with all its Perquisites great and small, will make all the spiritual Pills of the Romish Faith go sweetly down.

A Duke, and a Peer, is as easily to be tempted as a private Gentleman; the flattering Prospect of some new Post that may give fresh Lustre to his Rank

Rank is more than enough. How hard would it be to find a Courtier, at *Versailles*, who would put his Religion in balance with a Marshal of *France's* Staff!

To be fully persuaded that the Religion of the Prince sooner or later absorbs all others, we have only to consider how many illustrious Protestant Families, in the Reign of *Henry IV.* such as the *Robans*, the *Bouillons*, *La Foras*, the *Gondrins*, and several others, have turn'd back again to Popery. Is this the Effect of all conquering Grace? A *Jansenist* Curate may be prejudiced enough to believe so; but a *Jesuit* will consider better, and may indeed verbally attribute to Heaven what in his Heart he believes to be only owing to Policy, and is too well acquainted with the secret Springs of that Science to be imposed upon by the sudden Conversions at Court in the Reigns of *Lewis XIII.* and *Lewis XIV.*

The Protestants are no less ambitious than the Papists, and consequently no less subject to Change, when they have any Prospect of gratifying their Vanity. As there is at present no Family of Distinction in *France* of the Protestant Religion, so neither is there any in *Sweden* and *Denmark* of the Roman Catholick. The Religion of the Sovereign has had an equal Influence in these different Kingdoms, and it will every where be the same.

The Election of *Augustus* in *Poland* was a fatal Stroke to the Protestants, having introduced into that Prince's Territories Opinions which, sooner or later, will acquire the same Credit there as in other Catholick Countries. 'Tis almost impossible but, some time or other, an Elector of *Saxony*, extremely zealous for his Religion, will give the finishing Blow to the Protestant Cause. I take it, that the Prince who now reigns in *Saxony* is just such as *Henry IV.* with regard to Religion,

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his Son, perhaps, will resemble *Lewis XIII.* and his Grandson *Lewis XIV.* And, if this be the Case, what will become of the Protestant Religion? Long before the fourth Generation, its Fate, in this Part of *Germany*, will be the same as what it met with in the *Palatinate*, and in the Bishoprick of *Spire*.

By the different Losses which the Protestants have suffer'd for some time in *Germany*, and which have not, so far as I can see, been counter-balanced by any unlucky Accident that has happen'd to the Papists, it would seem as if the latter would get the better, and regain a great Part, if not all that they have lost. They once indeed had the Ball at their Foot by certain favourable Turns, but then State Policy, and the Interest of Princes, stopp'd their Carreer. Had the Court of *Vienna* chose a Husband to the eldest Archdutchess out of the Protestant Princes, there is not one of them but what would have said, *That the Kingdoms of Hungary and Bohemia, and the Dominions of Austria and Silesia, were worth all the grand Masses that ever were, or would be sung to the End of the World.* Now let me, for a Moment, suppose that the Prince Royal of *Prussia* had got what the Duke of *Lorraine* has obtain'd, the Consequence would have been the Re-establishment of the Catholick Religion in *Prussia* and *Brandenbourg*, where it would, of Course, have been the Religion of the State, the Path to Honours, consequently soon profess'd by Courtiers and the Ambitious, and, before the fourth Generation, by every Family of Note.

A pretty singular Thought comes just now into my Mind. Could the Papists but have the Art to make the proper Use of their Advantages, with only the Kingdom of *Poland*, they might, in less than 200 Years, render all the Courts in *Germany* sub-

submissive to the *Roman* Pontiff; and, in order to bring about this, the Way would be to render this elective State the Inheritance of some Protestant Prince that should turn Roman Catholick. After having gain'd *Saxony*, the next Thing would be to offer the Crown to the King of *Denmark*, and, after his Decease, to the King of *Sweden*. Thus, in an Age or two, *Poland* might be worth, in Church Coin, seven or eight times more than *France*, according to *Henry IV.*'s rating his Kingdom at no higher Value than a single Mass.

'Tis certain, that in the Elections of the Empire, and of *Poland*, the Papists have two great Opportunities of aggrandizing themselves, and 'tis not to be doubted but, sooner or later, they will make use of them to Advantage. They have already felt the Benefit of the first, and why should they not hereafter make use of the second? What does not happen in two Ages, may happen in three. About fifty Years ago it would have been thought ridiculous to have asserted, that *Saxony* should soon be govern'd by a Popish Prince, and *Poland* by an Elector, who was not long since a Protestant, and yet, in our own Days, we have seen all these Events. We actually look upon the Supposition of a Papist King of *Prussia* and Emperor, as a Thing void of all Probability; but our Great-grandchildren will not, perhaps, be so surpris'd at it.

The Reformed have not the same Advantages as their Adversaries, having no elective Kingdom to give, they cannot offer a Crown as a Bait to a Popish Prince. All they can do is, to secure to themselves the peaceable Possession of certain Dominions which give them no Handle to meddle in the Elections of Sovereigns. *Holland*, the *Swiss* Cantons, the Imperial Protestant Cities, will never be in the Case of Kingdoms govern'd by Princes.

But what's such a confin'd Tract of Country compared to what is possess'd by so many Protestant Kings, who may be tempted, by the Offer of a Crown, to embrace the Catholick Religion?

All these Reasons, my dear *Isaac*, persuade me, that notwithstanding the surprising Progress which the Protestant Religion made on its first setting out, it may, in process of Time, without a Miracle, lose all its Advantages, and be reduced to a very low Ebb. The Damage that it has sustain'd in *France* and *Germany*, is, in my Opinion, inferior to what Popery has suffered in *England*. The Electors of *Saxony*, by abandoning the Party of the Protestants, turn the Scale on the Side of Popery; and I don't well conceive how their Adversaries can repair this Blow. 'Tis true that they are still very powerful, but, in short, there are Conjunctions wherein no human Power can stem the Tide. Should it happen but once more, that only one Sovereign of the North should change his Religion, the Protestant Interest in *Germany* would be in a very bad Way. This, perhaps, may not happen, and, if so, the Protestants can stand the Battle with their Enemies; but if it should, the Papists will lead the Dance.

From all which I think it may be reasonably concluded, that Reflections on the State of *Nazarénism*, what it may turn to in three or four Ages hence, serve only to throw us into Doubts, and Time alone can clear up so impenetrable a Mystery. Who can tell whether, 200 Years hence, *France*, instead of protecting the *Roman* Pontiff, will not oppose him, and embrace a new Scheme of Religion as different from Popery as from the Protestant Faith? Or who can foretel whether some new Opinion will not start up, and be in Vogue? The daily Disputes that arise among Popish Divines are as serviceable to the Protestant Religion,

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Religion, as the Ambition of obtaining an elective Kingdom is to the Popish. Nature still knows how she form'd the Brains of the first Reformers. She has nothing more to do but, at a proper Occasion, to produce another *Calvin* in *France*, who would do more Harm to Popery than the Conversion of two Protestant Princes could repair.

Farewel, my Friend, may thou be ever happy.

*Amsterdam, *****.*



LETTER CXIII.

ISAAC ONIS to AARON MONCECA.

IN Answer to thy Letter upon the Uncertainty of the future State of *Nazarenism*, I shall freely tell thee, that, in all Appearance, before two Ages are past, very extraordinary Changes will happen in the Sects of that Religion: But 'tis my Opinion, that Popery has more Reason to be afraid of some dangerous Revolution than the Protestant Religion, though thou seem'st to think otherwise. However, I don't despair, after I have told thee my Reasons, of making a Change in thy way of Thinking about this Matter, and of making it appear, very plainly, that the *Roman* Pontiffs have rather been losing than gaining Ground in *Europe* for a hundred Years past, and that the Court of *Rome* has less Power now than it had a little after the Reformation.

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The Banishment of *French* Protestants is no just Equivalent for the total Extirpation of Popery in *England*. The Kings of *France* were never Protestants, and consequently, according to thy own Principles, thou must allow that *Calvinism* could not be look'd upon, in their Government, as a Religion that would make any great Progress, that of the Prince, in process of Time, swallowing up and destroying all the others. The Protestants, after the Death of *Henry IV.* might well have foreseen what has happened. Was it to be imagined that they could long hold out against Enemies supported by the Credit and Power of the Sovereigns? The *English* Roman Catholicks, on the contrary, had all the Reason in the World to hope for good Success; for, after the Reigns of several Protestant Kings, a Popish Prince was placed upon the Throne, which was such a favourable Turn, that they had Reason to imagine the Day was their own: But Things changed all at once. This Prince, on whom they founded all their Hopes, was forced to abandon his Kingdom, and his Subjects signaliz'd his Banishment by an authentick Act excluding for ever, from the Crown of *England*, all Princes adhering to the Faith of the *Roman* Pontiff. Judge then, my Friend, how much Popery has suffer'd more than the Protestant Religion in these different Revolutions. The Reform'd were banish'd out of a Country where the Prince was against them, and where their Privileges had been long suppress'd. The Roman Catholicks were proscrib'd in three Kingdoms where the Prince protected them, where they flatter'd themselves to bear all before them by his Credit, and where every thing seem'd to favour their high Expectations. Besides, by the Banishment of the *French* Protestants, Popery is no ways secured against the Attacks of some new Adversaries, whereas the Reform'd of *Eng-*
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land have rais'd invincible Barriers against all Attacks from the Court of *Rome*. Should a new Sect start up at *London*, under the Wings of Presbytery or the Church of *England*, it will never endeavour to hurt the Protestant Religion in favour of Popery: But, should any new Doctrine peep out in *France*, it will naturally tend to the Destruction of the Authority of the *Roman* Pontiffs, of which Experience demonstrates the Truth. The *Jansenists* are the Successors of the Protestants, and sooner or later they will come to be as warmly engaged with the Court of *Rome* as the first Reformers were.

Take this Reflection along with thee, that every new Sect, which shall start up hereafter, will directly aim at the Overthrow of Popery, and be no ways hurtful to the Protestants. Fifty Years ago, or thereabouts, all the *Dutch Roman* Catholics profess'd but one Faith, but now they are divided into *Molinists* and *Jansenists*; by which Separation the Papists have been Losers, and the Protestants in some measure Gainers.

Thou'lt, perhaps, turn the Weapons upon me, by representing, that new Opinions, among Protestants, make Separations, which must be hurtful to the whole, by diminishing the Number of such as stick to the fundamental Articles of that Religion. But let this be my Answer, that the Sects which arise in the Protestant Religion are of no great Prejudice to it, because they are all agreed to stand up and preach the total Destruction of Popery. They're so intent upon the Ruin of the common Enemy, that they forget to persecute one another. The Disciples of *Luther*, *Calvin*, *Menno* and *Arminius* have the same Views, and only take different Roads to accomplish them, and always unite when a favourable Opportunity offers to give Popery a Blow, so that the Hatred of the *Ro-*

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man Pontiff, is the Knot and Cement of the several *Nazarene* Sects; but when any new one starts up in the Popish Religion, it directly chimes in with the Sentiments of the others, so far as they tend to humbling the Court of *Rome*.

The extravagant Conduct of the *Romish* Priests and Doctors is likewise of great Advantage to the Protestants, and will, sooner or later, prove the entire Ruin of Popery. When any Divisions are form'd in the *Romish* Church, the Pontiff immediately excommunicates those whose Sentiments displease him, and few Ages pass without some such Separations. These lopp'd off Branches diminish the Tree, and by Degrees nothing will remain but the Trunk half rotten, and incapable of putting forth new Sprigs. The Protestants act more prudently. They have no Notion of persecuting the Sects that spring up among them, but content themselves with not approving them, and, by this wise Moderation, hinder them from carrying Things to those Extremities into which Popery, by its Cruelties, drives all those that arise within the Pale of that Church.

Those, my dear *Monceca*, are the many Reasons that induce me to think the Protestant Religion less in Danger of being destroyed, in the Sequel, than Popery. 'Tis true thou pinchest me a little with the Change of the Protestant Princes to the *Romish* Communion: But, in taking a View of the present State of *Europe*, thou'lt see, that this Advantage does not make so much for the Roman Catholicks as that which the Reformed may draw, some time or other, from the Conquest of one single Prince who becomes the Pope's Enemy. Thou supposeth, that, by the Election of *Poland* only, in the Space of an hundred Years, three different Monarchs may be drawn in to the *Romish* Religion. I agree that this is possible. But who
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can assure me that, in some Ages hence, all *Poland* will not be Protestant? Thou must not think it extraordinary, if I believe it possible that the Sovereign Pontiff may entirely lose his Authority there. This same *Poland*, from which thou now presagest so much Advantage to the Papists, had like to have turn'd *Lutheran* not twenty Years ago; and if it is not actually, what other Reason can be given for it than the extravagant Ambition and the mistaken Politicks of *Charles XII.* King of *Sweden*, who, after having made himself Master of it, so as to make it a depending Province, that might have been join'd to his other Dominions, chose rather to go and get himself beat at *Pultowa*, and, in one Day, to lose the Conquests of several Years, than to secure himself in the peaceable Possession of the Dominions which he had subdued. The whimsical Ambition which that Prince had of imitating *Alexander*, and of making Kings after his Example, made him place *Stanislaus* on the *Polish* Throne. The Papists, therefore, owe the Preservation of that Crown only to the Folly of a Protestant Prince. A modern Politician owns this Truth, though he excuses *Charles XII.* and extols his Disinterestedness and Magnanimity in yielding up a Kingdom which belong'd to him by Right of Conquest. "Count *Piper*, says this Author *, " seeing *Charles* Master of *Poland*, propos'd that " he should keep it for him, and, after the Example of *Gustavus Vasa*, to render it *Lutheran*. " The View of reimbursing his Expences, of aggrandizing his Kingdom, of extending his Religion, and of being reveng'd on the Pope, whose Power he hated, made him hesitate a Moment; " but, when he came to consider, that he had declared to the *Poles* that he had no Design against " their Nation, and that he had only insisted on " their

* The Political Works of the *Abbe de St Pierre*, Tom IX, Pag. 35.

" their driving out *Augustus*, and electing another
 " King, *I will have nothing to do with a Kingdom*,
 " said he, *that I can't keep to myself without Breach*
 " of Promise; and, in this Occasion, 'tis more ho-
 " nourable to give a Kingdom than to keep it. I
 " doubt if the Czar would have had such a noble
 " way of Thinking as to keep his Promise upon such
 " Terms?

Without examining, my Friend, if this Author
 had Reason to commend the Disinterestness of
Charles XII. I shall make use of his last Words to
 prove another Advantage that the *Roman Pontiff's*
 Enemies may, some Day or other, gain upon their
 Adversaries. He frankly owns, that if the Czar
 had been as much Master of *Poland* as *Charles XII.*
 was, he would not have scrupled to keep it for
 himself, and would have annexed to it the other
 Provinces of *Muscovy*. Who knows what may
 happen in some Ages hence? We already see that
Muscovites give Kings to the *Poles*. Why may not
 they, hereafter, think fit to conquer it for them-
 selves? The Power of the *Muscovites* will, sooner
 or later, be a terrible Sting in Popery's Side with
 respect to the Dominions bordering upon them.
 It can't be denied but that all the Conquests they
 make are an Increase of Power to a Nation that
 mortally hates the Court of *Rome*. The Hatred
 of the Protestants is slight compar'd with that of
 the *Greek Nazarenes*. The *Muscovites* give Marks
 already of their Antipathy to the *Roman Pontiff*.
 The *Czarina* vigorously solicits the Emperor in fa-
 vour of the reform'd *Hungarians*, and Policy ob-
 ligen the Court of *Vienna* not to refuse what she
 demands. The Protestants have, on a sudden, ac-
 quired powerful Friends in the North. Forty
 Years ago, the *Muscovites* seem'd to be as little
 concern'd, and as much Strangers to the Disputes
 betwixt the *Roman Catholics* and Protestants, as the

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the Quakers are at this Day. Who can foresee the new Events that may give other Allies to the Reformed? They are certainly assured, that the Ambition and Tyranny of the Court of *Rome* will do them good Service that Way, and even in their own Pale. What an illustrious Poet has sung of ancient *Rome* may be apply'd to the modern City.

———*Ce n'est point au bout de l'Univers,
Que Rome fait sentir tout le Poids de ses Fers.
Et, de pris inspirant les Haines les plus fortes,
Tes plus fiers Ennemies, Rome, sont à tes Portes*.*

Thus Paraphras'd.

*'Tis not to distant Climes that mighty Rome,
With Rigour, her enslaving Chains extends;
Her fiercest Foes are hid within her Walls,
And spread Dissention with infernal Zeal.*

'Tis my Opinion, that the *Venetians* may be rank'd among those secret Enemies who preserve a Decorum for political Reasons only. How many more Nations are there, who, in Appearance, are submissive to the Sovereign Pontiff, and yet constantly upon the Watch to guard against his Encroachments? They dissemble, because they think it is their Interest: But if this Interest should cease, or if it should take a new Turn, with what Joy wou'd not they entirely shake off a Yoke which, for so long a Time, has been insupportable to them?

'Tis not only by indirect Means that the Court of *Rome* contributes, without knowing it, to propagate the Protestant Religion, but sometimes even voluntarily. The personal Interests of the Pontiffs sometimes prevail over the Obligations and Duties of their Rank. Several of them have pub-

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* *Racine*, in the Tragedy of *Mithridates*, Act III. Scencl.

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lickly favour'd the Reformed. *Innocent XI.* was partly the Cause of Popery's being abolish'd in *England*, and of the Banishment of King *James*.

Had two or three Pontiffs the same domestick and political Interests as this had, what would become of Popery, if the Protestants knew how to make the proper Use of their Advantages? They fairly own those which the Hatred of the Pope, but now mention'd, against *France* procur'd them.

“ The King (*says an Author of their Communion* *)
 “ wrote a Letter to the Cardinal d'Etrees, which
 “ was communicated to the Cardinals, wherein
 “ he complained of the Pope's Conduct, and took
 “ particular Notice of the Prejudice that *Europe*
 “ and the Church might suffer for what he had
 “ already done to the Cardinal de Furstemberg. To
 “ this Partiality he attributed the Intrigues carried
 “ on against King *James*, in favour of the Prote-
 “ stant Religion, &c. This Letter, dispers'd in
 “ *Rome*, was perhaps a new Motive which indu-
 “ ced the Pope to favour more and more *Clement*
 “ of *Bavaria*, in prejudice of Cardinal de Furstem-
 “ berg. Now, by the Exclusion of this Eminence,
 “ he took an ample Revenge of all the Affronts
 “ he had met with, by depriving the King of *France*
 “ of the Advantage of being the Arbiter of Peace
 “ and War, and found Means to embroil him with
 “ almost all *Europe*. He quickly saw the Effect
 “ of this Conduct; and though he did not long
 “ survive this dreadful Revenge, yet he lived long
 “ enough to have the Joy of seeing *France* attack'd
 “ by so many Enemies, that, according to the ge-
 “ neral Opinion, she must have sunk, as into an
 “ Abyss, the very first Campaign.”

After reflecting on the Conduct of *Innocent XI.* pray examine that of *Sextus Quintus*, who declared himself openly in the Interests of *Henry IV.* and

Elizabeth,

* *Bayle's Hist. Diss.* the Article of *Innocent XI.*

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Elizabeth, to the Prejudice of *Philip II.* and thou'lt be perswaded, that 'tis not impossible but that the Protestants may not only be obliged to the *Roman* Pontiffs for their Preservation, but likewise for their Aggrandisement.

Farewel, my Friend; I long to hear from thee.

Cairo, *****.



L E T T E R CXIV.

ISAAC ONIS to AARON MONCECA.

SINCE my last Letter I've made some new Reflections upon the Changes that may happen in *Nazarenism*, and I flatter myself to have discover'd new Reasons that very much favour my Opinion. The Love that the Laity have for the Sciences, the Contempt into which Scholastick Philosophy is fallen, as also the Monks, formerly the sole Depositaries of Books and MSS. all these Things concur unanimously to the Destruction of the Credit of *Rome*.

'Twas by the Favour of Ignorance and Superstition that the *Roman* Pontiffs establish'd their Power; and the blind People respectfully kiss'd the Chains that held them fast: But now the Mask is dropp'd, and Truth holds up her Head. The Laity, sensible of the Weakness of their Forefathers, will take care not to be bubbled by the Priests and Monks as they were. The first Instant in which Ignorance began to lose its Prerogative, may be

look'd upon as the fatal Moment wherein it was ordain'd by Heaven, that the Court of *Rome* should be humbled. Since the People have made use of the Talents which the Divine Being bestows upon all Mankind, and have conceived, that, the Understanding being the most glorious Appannage of the human Nature, 'twas preferring the State of Beasts to that of Men not to cultivate the Sciences; Superstition, the Power of the Pontiffs, and the Tricks of their Agents, lose Credit every Day. Men, now on their Guard against the Stratagems formerly employ'd to deceive them, are not now to be so easily led by the Nose. Before they'll admit of an Opinion, they must have Time to examine it; and it often happens that they reject it, as being contrary to the Rules of Reason and Equity. In former Ages, a Pontiff authoris'd his Passions under the Veil of Religion, and the People look'd upon them as the Effects of a pious Zeal. *Hildebrand* obliged the Emperor *Henry IV.* to appear before him, after a Week of Fasting and Imprisonment, in the humble Attitude of a Malefactor. But now-a-days the Writings of a Pontiff that happen to contain anything injurious either to the Person or Memory of Sovereigns, are stigmatiz'd, and condemn'd to the Flames.

Remark, my Friend, that the Power of *Rome* has fallen quicker or slower, as the Sciences have been more or less cultivated by the Laity. In former Times, when some began already to be distinguished by their Learning, *Boniface VIII.* would fain have imitated *Hildebrand*; but he miscarried in his Projects. *Philip* the Fair mortify'd him upon sundry Occasions, and made his Embassador insult the Pontifical Throne. When the *Belles Lettres* gain'd fresh Vigour under *Francis I.* and all *Europe* began to cultivate them, the Emperor *Charles V.* added Contempt to Insult; for he order'd Prayers

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to God, throughout his Dominions, for the Deliverance of a Pope, at the same time that he kept him Prisoner at *St Angelo*. At last, *Lewis XIV.* carried Matters further than any other Monarch, by causing to be erected in the Middle of *Rome* a lasting Monument of the Abasement of the *Roman* Pontiffs; and, by building a Pyramid, reveng'd the many Insults made upon the Honour of Crown'd Heads.

The Sovereigns, nevertheless, who thus cruelly mortified the Pontiffs, pretended to be very zealous for *Nazarenism*. Judge then what other Sovereigns might be capable of doing against Popery who should be persuaded, that the Power of the Court of *Rome* is directly contrary to the fundamental Points of the *Nazarene* Religion.

Since it is to the Return of Sciences that Princes have been obliged for the Right which they have acquired of defending themselves against the Insults of the Clergy, it may be laid down as a certain Principle, *That the more Insight the People get, the more the Phantom of Popery vanishes, and, in a short Time, will make no Impression but upon the Minds of silly Women and Idiots.*

Formerly, a Dispensation from the Oath of Allegiance by the Pontiffs, was a lawful Motive of Rebellion in the most peaceful States. The credulous *Nazarenes* imagin'd, that a Kingdom interdicted, and a King excommunicated, would draw down Thunder; and that Heaven would dart all its Bolts upon wretched Mortals that were so presumptuous as to resist God's Vicegerent: But now, People are not only persuaded, that the Thunder of the *Vatican* did never hurt any Man's Health, but even the *French*, and many other Nations, maintain, with great Warmth, that the *Roman* Pontiffs have no Right to excommunicate Kings. Were they to attempt, now-a-days, what they have

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done in Ages past with so much Ease and Success, the Subjects, without the Princes seeming to take part themselves in the Offence, would infalibly punish the Temerity of the *Roman Court*.

“ If it had happen’d (*says Pasquier **) that the Pope, out of Spite, should lay the King and his Kingdom under an Interdict, in order to throw it open to the first Occupier, though we were at Liberty to appeal from him to a future Council; yet, without involving ourselves in Preplexities, and making choice of the shortest Way, the Appeal on Incroachment or Abuse would do the Business, this being an Undertaking, not only against the sacred Decrees, but also against the express Word of God, which is stronger, and by which he declares, *That the Spiritual Jurisdiction shall have no Power over the Temporal*. To make short of the Matter, we may, by these Models, be arm’d against all Incroachments that may be made by the Court of *Rome*, not only against the King, but even inferior Persons, more-over against the Dispensations themselves, when it appears, that, through superstitious Practices, the *Holy See* has been imposed upon, and that they redound more to the Destruction than Edification of the Church; *otherwise* (*says Gerson*) *’tis not using the Fullness of Power, but fully abusing its Power.*”

In my Opinion it would have been dangerous, I don’t say to a petty Prince, but even to a formidable Sovereign, to have explain’d himself as *Pasquier* did in the Pontificate of *Hildebrand*; and, at this present Time, a mere private Man makes nothing of publicly declaring his Thoughts. The Magistrates go further, for they authorise them; and there’s not a single Counsellor of the Parliament but has a hundred Times more Power over the

* *Recherches de la France*, Lib. III. Cap. XXXIV. Pag. 28.

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the Court of *Rome* than the Emperor *Henry IV.* It must therefore be allow'd, that, from the Reign of that unfortunate Monarch, to this Time, the Power of Popery is, at least, as much diminish'd as there is Disproportion betwixt the Credit of a simple Judge and that of a Sovereign.

I own, that there are certain Junctures in which the Power of the *Roman* Pontiff's seems to gather Strength, and throws out Sparks which make People afraid of a Fire not yet extinguish'd, and which, by being latent under the Ashes, is the more dreadful; but these transient Blazes are the last Efforts of a Fire which, having no more Matter to consume, extinguishes for want of Nourishment, Superstition and Ignorance being the only Combustibles that kept it alive. All the Efforts of the Tools of *Rome* will be of no Use. They cannot keep up a Building whose Foundation is shaken; so that 'tis ready to tumble with the least Shock. The Beams with which they prop it only delay its Fall a little longer. The Divisions and Disturbances which the *Jesuites* have caused in *France* for many Years, are more prejudicial than favourable to Popery. The Disputes upon the *Roman* Pontiff's Authority serve only to open Peoples Eyes the more, and consequently to destroy it; for there are some Things that suffer by being look'd into, which is just the Case with the Court of *Rome*; and it never happen'd but that, when the Transactions of that Court were div'd into, they lost by the Enquiry. Had it never endeavour'd to force that *Constitution*, which makes so much Noise at this Time, and had always kept the Theological Disputes from the Knowledge of the Laity, the different Factions, which now divide *France*, wou'd only be compos'd of a few hot headed Clergymen, actuated by a Spirit of Contradiction. But they were resolv'd to draw the People into a Quarrel,

in

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in which they had no manner of Concern. The Pontiffs really believ'd that they should find Dupes among them always ready to adopt their Whimfies. To render the *Jansenists* odious, they attempted to restrain private Men from having any Correspondence with those who they said maintain'd Errors. The *French*, accusom'd not to believe the Court of *Rome* any more upon its Word, have examin'd whether what they told were true; and this Enquiry has had a quite different Effect from what the Pontiffs expected. Three Fourths of the Kingdom have embraced the Opinions which were condemn'd, and on which the Gross of the People wou'd not have thought, had they not been inspir'd with a Curiosity to know them.

The Movements which the Creatures of *Rome* actually give themselves to remedy these Evils are to no Purpose. They will, 'tis true, be able, for some Time, to humble these new Enemies of the Pontiffs, but they are too numerous to be destroyed. When they have recover'd fresh Strength, and repair'd the Damage they have sustain'd, sooner or later they will come again upon the Stage with more Assurance and Intrepidity than before; if not under the same Name and Standard, they will still be conducted by the same Spirit. I'll allow that, in ten Years Time, *Jansenism* may be destroy'd in *Paris*, yet two Centuries would not suffice to diminish the Hatred which its Inhabitants have conceived against the Pontiffs, And who can tell but, some Time or other, this Hatred may be authorised by the Sovereign. What's necessary to render the King of *France* an Enemy to the Court of *Rome*? A slight Quarrel with that Court, a Favour deny'd which ought to have been granted. Love, in short, that Deity that surmounts all Obstacles, may, in a Moment, destroy those who seem to oppose a Separation of the *French* from the *Romish* Com-

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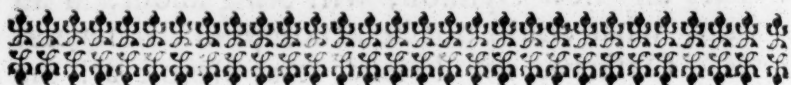
Communion. A *Jansenist* Mistress, or one that favours any new Opinion, will bring about, in an Instant, what could not be accomplish'd in several Ages. Observe, my Friend, that almost all the new Sects are obliged to the Women for their Aggrandisement. What Obligations had the Protestant Religion to Queen *Margaret*? What Advantage did it not reap from *Henry VIII.*'s Quarrels with the Court of *Rome* about *Anne of Bullen*? Who knows but that, in a hundred Years hence, or sooner, some *French* Lady, Favourite of her King, and a Stickler for the new Opinions, may not be the Cause of the same Revolution in *France* as we have seen happen in so many different Countries? When such Things were least expected, and Affairs were supposed to be in the most peaceable and secure State, who would have thought that the same *Henry VIII.* (who, not satisfied to defend Popery by his Royal Authority, but also, in the Character of a private Man, took up the Pen and turn'd Author) would afterwards have been the most cruel Enemy of Popery, and set his Kingdom for ever free from the Authority of the Pontiffs?

Farewel, my Friend, may thou ever be content and happy.

Cairo, *****.



LETTER



LETTER CXV.

AARON MONCECA to ISAAC ONIS.

I Was not a little surpris'd, my dear *Isaac*, to find *Jeremiah Plozfi* at *Berlin*, on my Arrival there: Thou knew him for many Years at *Constantinople*, which Place the Death of his Father obliged him to leave, and to come to *Germany*. He has lost a Part of his Estate, which has been retain'd under Pretence of some imaginary Malversations, whereof he stood accused, in the Direction of a rich Gentleman's Affairs, whose Steward he was. This is a pretty common Trick in this Country, where the Expedient is very often made use of to take an Advantage of the Labour and Toil of some unhappy *Israelite*.

Jeremiah Plozfi has shew'd me all that's remarkable at *Berlin*. This City holds a distinguish'd Rank among the fine Towns of *Europe*; its Streets are spacious and airy; the Houses are well built, and of a good Taste, and their Uniformity sets off the Architecture. The Royal Palace is extremely magnificent, though not entirely finish'd. The Suburbs vie with the City for Beauty and Grandeur, particularly that of *Frederickstadt*, which surpasses all the rest, the Streets being as straight as a Line, and of a considerable Length.

The Inhabitants of this Country, in general, resemble the other *Germans* as to their Manners. They are frank, Men of Honour, brave Soldiers,
and

and incapable of Prepossession for one Nation more than another. They esteem Merit where ever it is to be found; and they can, with as much Freedom, praise a Stranger as one of their own Countrymen, where they deserve equally. They look upon all Men as form'd of the same Clay, and believe, very justly too, that to think, reflect, judge, and to draw Consequences, is the Privilege of every rational Being; and that Men of Sense ought to make their Advantage of every thing that's good in any Nation, without being so silly as to reject an excellent Thing, or to criticise it, because it was done on this or t'other Side the *Rhine*. They leave the *English* in Possession of that ridiculous Fancy, that a Man born at *Dover* is much preferable to another born at *Calais*.

The *Germans* are the Ancestors of the *French*, who are, perhaps, obliged to them for some Part of what is good in their Manners. I have seen more than one of this Opinion at *Paris*; and I'm persuaded, that there are more for it than against it. What's very particular, is the Sympathy there always was between the *French* and *German* Nations, notwithstanding the bloody Wars in which their Princes engag'd them. They fought more out of Honour than Animosity; and when Peace put an End to their Quarrels, they imitated *Homer's* Heroes, and gave each other mutual Proofs of the reciprocal Esteem they had for one another.

The *Germans* are not insensible of the good Reception they meet with in *France*, and several of their learn'd Men have given publick Testimonies of this*.

The

* See how M. Wallin expresses himself in a Work, intitled, *Lutetia Parisiorum erudita*, printed in 1722. at Nuremberg. *Ingratissimus omnium quos terra unquam produxit hominum forem, nisi, quod verum sit de Gallia, sive eam rogatam, sive sagatam, sive eti-*

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The establish'd Religion at *Berlin* is *Lutheran*. *Calvinism* is also profess'd there, but 'tis not the Religion that bears Sway. A Part of *Germany* separated a little above two hundred Years ago from the Communion of the *Nazarene* Papists. A certain Monk *, a Man of great Abilities, having received some Displeasure from the Court of *Rome*, gave it this fatal Blow; and the Division which happen'd at that Time between several Princes of the Empire very much favour'd him, otherwise he would never have accomplish'd his Designs; and all his Eloquence would have perhaps been of no other Service than to draw upon him the Fate of *Savonarola* †, which happen'd some Years before.

The *Germans* honestly believe what they were taught in their Youth, and don't trouble their Heads with enquiring whether the Doctrines of their Religion be true or false. They leave it to the *French* to perplex their Brains with useless Disputes; and if they have abandon'd the *Romish* Communion, they have been forced to it by the Monks, whose Insolence was not to be bore even by *German* good Nature.

They who ascribe the Change of the *Germans* to the Learning and Subtilty of their Divines, know little of that Nation not to be persuaded by Syllogisms: Besides, in the Beginning of the Troubles on account of the *Nazarene* Religion, the People were

am sacram, considero, dicerem, nihil eâ ipsa dari elegantius, & societati hominum civili gratius. i. e. I should be the most ungrateful Man that ever the Earth bred, if I did not declare the Truth of what I know concerning *France*, whether as to the Gentlemen of the long Robe, or of the Sword, or its Clergy, viz. that there is not a Nation in the World more polite, and better turn'd for Civil Society.

* *Luther.*

† A Friar of the Order of *St Dominic*, who was hang'd with a Couple of his Comrades at *Florence*, in the Year 1498. for having preach'd against the Irregularities of the Court of *Rome*.

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were so ignorant, that Learning was to them of no Use.

The Learn'd in *Germany* have publish'd several elaborate Pieces, that abound with Things both curious and useful, but so voluminous, that it were to be wish'd, to render them more useful, they were cast into a Crucible and refin'd; by which Means what's good might be separated from the Dross, which diminishes the Value of the true Metal with which it is mix'd.

There are, however, great Men in this Country, and the Universities abound with very good Civilians and able Physicians. The famous *Puffendorf*, Author of *the Law of Nature and Nations*, and of several other Works, deserves to be rank'd in the first Class of learn'd Men, and to be consider'd as the Rival of the illustrious *Grotius*.

The *Germans* have also several good Historians. 'Tis true, their Stile is sometimes prolix, loose, and by consequence languid. The too great Credit that they give to certain foreign Authors, involves them also in another Error, and hinders their discovering Truth from Falshood, especially when they treat of any other State but their own. The *German* Sincerity cannot imagine how 'tis possible for an Historian to lie in the Face of the whole World. It were therefore to be wish'd, that some good Friend would charitably admonish them not to trust to the *Spanish*, *Italian*, *English*, or *French* Writers, till they have duly consider'd what Degree of Credit they deserve.

I would have them, for Instance, to rely a good deal upon *Thuanus*, pretty much upon *Mezeray*, a little upon *Daniel*, but not at all upon *Maimbourg* and *Varillas*, and less, if it was possible, upon *Jouvenci*; that, of all the *Italians*, they would trust none but *Frà Paolo*; and that, to form themselves to the Majesty of History, they would read *Da-*

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vila, an excellent Author had there neither been Pontiffs nor *Inquisition*, and had he always observed Truth, as he did the Clearness of Stile, and the Solidity of Reflections. I would have them read all the *Spanish* Historians, when they treat of Things done in their own Country; as the Works of Monks, who have wrote the Annals of their Convents. With some every thing is Prodigy, is marvellous; with others every thing is a Miracle, every thing an Act of Sanctity. The *English*, who are not so grave, to outward Appearance, as the *Spaniards*, but every whit as conceited, have a great Number of Orators, but not one Historian. They are so infatuated with their own dear selves, and not only so prejudiced against foreign Nations, but even know not how to do themselves Justice, so far are they always blinded by a Spirit of Party. A *Jacobite* Historian places *Mary Stewart* among the greatest *Nazarene* Saints, and does not scruple to place her upon a very high Throne in Heaven. A *Whig* Historian, on the contrary, after having publicly accused her of Debauchery, Adultery and Murder, sends her, without Ceremony, to the lowest Pit in Hell. A *Frenchman* has wrote the History of *England*, and has done it so candidly, that the *English* have been forced to allow that it is the best extant; which is certainly very much to the Honour of the *French* Writers: But, unfortunately, this Sort of Triumph has met with a sudden Stop, by the Death of *Rapin Thoiras* before the Work was finish'd; and other *Frenchmen* have added such a pitiful Sequel to it, that they have done their own Nation as much Dishonour as the former had done it Honour.

Among the ancient *German* Authors, *Sleidan* stands in a very distinguish'd Rank. He wrote the *History of the State of Religion, and of the Republick, under Charles V.* The *German* Papists, 'tis true,

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true, don't esteem this Work so much as the *German Lutherans*; however, they do it Justice, and 'tis generally approv'd.

Among the Moderns, *Hubner* has wrote almost as many Volumes as *Gregorio Leti*; but he's of more Use than that voluminous *Italian*, to whom the illustrious *Bayle* has ingeniously apply'd that Verse of *Virgil*:

Tam ficti pravique tenax, quam nuntia veri.*

Whatever Talent *Hubner* had, he was liable to those Faults that are common to his Nation. Sometimes he falls into tedious and impertinent Narrations. His too great Confidence, without Distinction, in foreign Authors, has hinder'd him from being so exact as he might have been, had he used more Precaution. But that's the Rock on which all Compilers have split.

Seckendorf is a great Man: He has wrote with a great deal of Strength, Probity, Candour and Impartiality, but he's too prolix, and too diffuse. *Bayle*, writing to one of his Friends, gives this Character of him. " *M. de Seckendorf's* Answer to the *Lutheranism* of *Maimbourg* has been printed in two large Volumes in *Folio*. 'Tis a curious Work, but extremely tedious. The Title of it runs, *Commentarius, historicus & apologeticus, de Lutheranismoadversus Maimburgium, &c. †.*"

The *German* Genius, in general, not very sprightly, and their Language, more proper for Tracts of Learning and Morality than Pieces of Eloquence and Poetry, seem to form an Obstacle against their having a great Number of Orators and Poets among them; nevertheless some they have. The best of those are *Saxons*, if we except one *Brocks*,
I 2 a Ham-

* See *Dryden's* Translation. † *Bayle's* Letters, Tom. I. P. 364.

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a *Hamburgher*, who passes for an excellent Author. The *Germans* say, that the Compositions of these Poets are good and harmonious, but they have two ancient and powerful Prejudices against them.

The first is founded upon the Authority of *Aristotle*, who, being born in a hot Country, imagin'd that the Genius of Men that lived in cold Countries could not be susceptible of much Fire; but since Experience has shewn us, for some time past, that the Authority of honest *Aristotle* was very weak, and that the *Nazarenes* do no more look upon his Sentiments as Articles of Faith, this Prejudice may be look'd upon as very false.

The second is founded upon the poor Figure their Poets make in *Europe*. As to this, it seems to be reasonable: For though an Author writes in a Language peculiar to his Nation, yet if he's of distinguish'd Merit, he is quickly translated into all Languages, and becomes common to all *Europe*. *Petrarch*, *Ariosto*, *Tasso*, *Guarini* *, &c. are translated into *French*, *Spanish*, *English*, &c. *Milton's Paradise lost*, and several Works of *Pope* †, are translated almost into as many Languages. All the Universe, by the Means of the many Translations, is Master of the fine Pieces of *Corneille* and *Racine*, and the *Andromache* of the latter has been translated by the most famous modern *Italian* Poet.

I know no *German* Poem that has made any Figure in *Europe*; and I doubt if ever there was one translated. This would make me suspect that either the *Germans* have not so good Poets as they imagine, or that they perceive Beauties in their Works which none but *Germans* can perceive. In this Case the *German* Poems would be a kind of *Talisman*, that had no Virtue but conditionally.

Charles

* *Italian* Poets.

† *English* Poets.

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Charles V. thou knowest, was heard to say, that he would pray in *Spanish*, court his Mistress in *Italian*, speak to his Friend in *French*, and to his Horse in *High Dutch*; which is but a bad Encomium on the Harmony and Softness of *German* Verses. The Muses are shy of a Language whose Roughness shocks them. But as there is no Language that is not capable of a soft and agreeable Cadence, when 'tis well express'd, I should be apt to think that the Fault of the *German* Poems is owing rather to the Poets than the Language. Some Nations excel more than others in certain Sciences. The *Germans*, indeed, are eminent for their Skill in the Law of Nations, Politicks, Literature and Philosophy; and *Leibnitz* alone is worth a hundred Poets in the *Republick of Letters*.

Farewel, my dear *Isaac*, live content and happy.

Berlin, *****.



LETTER CXVI.

JACOB BRITO to AARON MONCECA.

HAVING given thee an Account how the Monks carry on their Gallantries here, I shall now endeavour to inform thee how the Gentlemen treat their Mistresses, which they do with all the Ceremonial of the ancient Court *Etiquette* or Ceremony.

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Before a Don dares presume to declare his Passion, he must dance Attendance for seven or eight Months under his Mistress's Windows, and endeavour to gain her Esteem and Favour by Abundance of Serenades. He must be sure to go regularly to the Churches which his Fair One frequents; and, last of all, he must lash himself devoutly under her Windows, if Opportunity presents, and his Mistress happens to be a Spectator of the Processions made by the *Nazarenes* about the End of *Lent*.

When a *Spaniard* thinks, that, by all these Extravagancies, he has made some Impression upon the Heart of the Person he makes Love to, he ventures to send a *Billet-doux* by some old *Duenna**, whom he takes care to secure in his Interest; and if he's favour'd with an Answer, he thinks himself the happiest Man alive. Then he begins to converse with his Mistress by Signs in the Walks and at Church, and this continues till they are marry'd, when she is directly shut up, and he more or less jealous as she has been more or less cruel, the Happiness and Tranquillity of a Wife commonly depending on the bad Treatment and Rigours she made him suffer while a Lover. The haughty *Don Sancho's* and *Don Pedro's* can't conceive how any other Mortal can easily obtain Favours, when it cost him so much Pains to be happy: Their Self-love is to them a sure Guarantee of the Virtue and Fidelity of their Wives.

Several Authors have call'd this Country the Centre of Gallantry; but I can't think there's any Nation where it is less known, except a Medley of Follies may pass for pretty Ways, and unless it be granted that a Man cannot be a tender Lover without being a Fool and a Madman.

Let

* The *Duenna* is a sort of Governess.

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Let Men cry up the Discretion and Constancy of *Spaniards* as much as they please, all these pretended Virtues are blended with so many ridiculous Follies, that one must be accustom'd to them not to look upon them with more Contempt than the Petulancy and Giddiness of a *French Petit-Maitres*.

I am of Opinion, that out of a *Spaniard* and a *Frenchman* together, might be form'd a tolerable Lover, though separately they are far from being so when they are in Love. Let this be as it will, I'd rather see People laughing, singing, dancing, and playing the Fool, than to hear them continually goaning, sighing and lamenting. *Cupid* delights in Sports and Pastimes, but Constraint renders him morose and cruel: So see we, in this Country, that the jealous Temper of the *Spaniards* is drove, by Melancholy, to surprising Excesses. The Women themselves are guilty of this Fault, and their Passion renders them capable of the greatest Crimes. They are as jealous as the Men: And Love, in *Spain*, is rather what we may call a horrible Frenzy, than an agreeable Passion, to which Mankind are subjected with a View to their Happiness.

Towards the Close of the last Century, the Marquis *d'Astorgas*, of the *Osoño* Family, Grand Master of the Queen's Household, had married a Lady extremely jealous of him, which did not, however, hinder his being in Love with a young Person of extraordinary Beauty. The Marchioness, enraged to be so rival'd, resolved to be revenged, and, with that Design, went to her Rival's House with a good Attendance, kill'd her, tore out her Heart, made a Ragoo of it, and presented it in a Dish to her Husband, who had no sooner tasted it, but she ask'd him how he lik'd it. 'Tis very good, said he. I don't wonder at it, said

she, 'tis the Heart of that Mistress whom you was so fond of. Immediately she drew out the Head, all bloody, which she had conceal'd under her Hoop, and roll'd it upon the Table where he was sitting with his Friends. 'Tis easy to judge what a shocking Sight this must be to him. She fled to a Convent, where she became mad with Rage and Jealousy, and there ended her Days. The Affliction of the unfortunate Marquis was so great, that it had like to have drove him into Despair*.

A Story so surprising as this could scarce meet with Credit, were not the Persons concern'd known to all *Europe*; and Posterity will be astonish'd to see the Fact set out in all its Circumstances by the Authors of this Time.

Jealousy occasions Murders and Assassinations in *Spain* every Day. Poison is the ordinary Means to get rid of Rivals of either Sex; and the Women ordinarily carry this dangerous Passion to a greater Length than the Men. But however violent the jealous Temper of the *Spaniards* may be, 'tis less owing to a Tenderness in Love, than to the Vanity and Self-conceit which forms the principal Character of that Nation. The *Italians* are only jealous from Constitution, but the *Spaniards* join Pride to Constitution. Though they had but very little Love for their Wives and Mistresses, they would not hate their Rivals less. It is an unpardonable Crime with them, to pretend to say, that any body is more deserving than themselves; so that a Rival is always guilty by being preferr'd, and a Mistress by granting such Preference.

Were I to make Choice of a Mistress, I should wish her to have the Sprightliness of the *Spanish* Lady, the Gaiety of the *Italian*, and the Freedom of the *French*. These Qualities united, would absorb what there is too much of in one. I look

* *Memoirs of the Court of Spain, &c, Tom. I. Pag. 137.*

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upon Love to be like *Tartar Emetick*, in its own Nature, Poison, but may be so alleviated as to render it an useful Medicine. Happy the Lovers who know the just Preparation of this agreeable Remedy. Lovers in this Country enjoy an agreeable Privilege, by virtue of the Decisions of an Assembly of *Nazarene Pontiffs*, held near 200 Years ago *: They may marry without the Consent of their Parents; a Practice directly contrary to the Laws and Customs of *France*: Consequently the Fathers in this Country are never sure who will be the Husbands of their Daughters; for there are several who, without any Ceremony, go with their Lover to the Priest, receive the Nuptial Benediction, and laugh at their Fathers and Mothers, who can neither maltreat nor hinder them from living with the Man they have chose for their Husband.

The Assembly of the Pontiffs, which decided that the Consent of the Father was not necessary to Marriage, went upon the Principle, that such Union only consisted *in the free and voluntary Consent of the two Parties* †. It forbid all Attempts to dissolve Marriage, as is the Practice in *France*, and declared for a literal Adherence to the Maxim of their Sovereign Legislator, which commands them *not to put asunder, on any Pretence whatsoever, those whom God had join'd together* ‡. And that this Law might be strictly observ'd, the same Assembly pronounced an *Anathema* not only against the secular Judges who should take Cognizance of the Incidents and Disputes that might arise concerning the Celebration of Marriages, but even against those who should presume to think that such

Matters

* The Council of Trent.

† *Matrimonium est consensus partium liber & voluntarius.* Concilium Tridentinum.

‡ *Quod ergo Deus conjunxit homo non separet.* Matth. xix. 6.

Matters do not regard the Ecclesiastical Judges &c. What's pretty odd is, that several of the Decrees of this Assembly, upon which the Faith of the *Nazarenes in Spain* is founded, are not at all admitted in *France*. The Parliaments have establish'd a Distinction between Faith and Discipline. They pretended that this Assembly could not decide Matters that were not within its Jurisdiction, and, which is worse, to do it in a Manner directly contrary to the Privileges of the *French Nation*, whose Tribunals, as thou knowest very well, dissolve a great many Marriages, and declare them void, when they have been contracted against the Laws and Regulations of the Kingdom.

There is nothing so prudent as the Care of the Parliaments to maintain their own Prerogatives, those of the temporal Judges, and those which Parents ought to have over their Children. How many Disorders are the Consequence of this imprudent Indulgence granted to the latter, of marrying without the Consent of the former? Is it not paving the Way to Confusion and Disturbance? Is it not setting Children free from that Submission which they owe to those who have given them Life, a Thing so much recommended to all the Ancients? God himself has expressly commanded it in his Law. 'Tis impossible for a Child that fears and honours its Parents to dispose of it self without their Consent, and its plainly neglecting to take their Advice in the most important Action of Life.

The Custom that authorizes Children to marry without consulting their Parents, is not only contrary to the Law of Nature, but also to the Harmony of Civil Society, in so far as it leads them to Matches that are by no means suitable, or in any

§ *Si quis dixerit causas matrimoniales non ad iudices ecclesiasticos pertinere, Anathema sit.* Conc. Triden.

any just Proportion. What Mischiefs are not to be dreaded from a Law that permits young People; transported by the Fury of their Passions, to gratify them without any Reserve? We daily see People advanced in Age give into Extravagancies, by Marriages that either dishonour or ruin them. What will not, therefore, those do, who are hurry'd on by the Violence of their Constitution, and who have neither the Experience nor the Knowledge of the former?

Yet none of these Reasons could prevail with the *Spaniards* to use the wise Precaution of the *French*: They received blindly, and without Reserve, the Decrees of that Pontifical Assembly, which the others rejected in Matters of Discipline. And therefore is it that every Day such extraordinary Adventures happen in this Country, that the *Spaniards*, in Spite of their Prejudice and Superstition, are convinced that the *French* have acted very discreetly in setting Bounds to the Licentiousness of Youth, and in reserving to secular Judges the Power of determining in Cases that regard Civil Society.

We often see young Ladies of Distinction marry'd to Clowns, or their Father's Domesticks; and young Men of Quality not ashamed to match with the very Scum of the People. Twelve or fourteen Years ago, the Daughter of the Governor of *Catalonia** made a private Marriage with a young Fellow who had been her Father's Page, and not worth a Groat. This Governor could not only never obtain the Dissolution of so unequal a Marriage, but was even oblig'd to suffer his Daughter to live with her Husband.

I think, my Friend, thou'lt scarce deny but that such Things as these absolutely ruin the good Order which ought to prevail in a State, and that

to

* Count Montemar.

to introduce such pernicious Maxims into a Government, is enough to overturn it. It must be allow'd, however, that they are less dangerous in *Spain* than they would be in any other Country. The Pride and Vanity of this Nation being a very great Hindrance to unequal Marriages. The proud and haughty *Don Diego's* and *Don Rodrigo's* are not so easily brought to descend from their Rank, and they must be desperately in Love to be reduced to such an Extremity.

The Women are not so scrupulous, and therefore give more readily into dishonourable Matches than the Men: They have not so much Power to resist, though they are every whit as proud; a Failing common to all that breathe in this Country. Even Strangers, when they have resided any considerable Time, contract this ill Habit; and we see *Frenchmen* here put on the grave sedate Air, walk with stiff and solemn Pace, and endeavour to speak sententiously: In short, they are more ridiculous than the *Spaniards* themselves; and I can't better conclude my Letter, than by applying to them that notable Passage of one of the most celebrated *French Writers* *. *Gravity is a Mystery of the Body, invented to conceal the Defects of the Mind.*

Farewel, my dear *Manceca*; may the God of our Fathers bless thee with his best Favours.

to *Madrid*, *****.



LETTER

* *Rocheaucant.*



LETTER CXVII.

AARON MONCECA to ISAAC ONIS.

A Few Days ago I arriv'd at *Hamburg*, which passes for one of the richest Cities in *Germany*, because Commerce draws thither Crowds of Merchants from all the Corners of *Europe*. The River *Elb* is not only an Ornament to it, but extremely useful, being navigable to the very Ramparts of the Town.

The City is well built, and full of very fine Houses: Several magnificent Walks adorn it; and the Beauty of the publick Structures answers to the Wealth of its Inhabitants. The Magistrates have the Government of Affairs Political and Civil, and represent the Sovereign.

Hamburg is one of those which are call'd *Imperial* Cities, and enjoys the Prerogative of keeping their own Guard, of coining Money, and, excepting a certain Acknowledgment to the Emperor, has all the Privileges of a free and independent Republick.

Of this sort of Cities there are several, all very jealous of their Privileges, and forming so many petty Republicks. However small their Territories may be, yet still they are larger than those of a good many *German* Princes. In which Country there are more Courts than in all the rest of *Europe* put together; so that a Traveller often

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passes through five or six different Dominions in a Day: And yet, as diminutive as these Princes are, they have several Gentlemen that attend them by way of Courtiers; but they don't cost them much. The greatest Expence of these Shadows of Sovereigns consist in their Table, which consumes two thirds of their Revenues.

There are as many *Highbesses* in *Germany* as there are *Excellencies* in *Brabant*; but the *German Highbesses* have a considerable Advantage over the *Flemish Excellencies*, which consists in the sad Prerogative of tormenting the Inhabitants of two or three Villages, whom they can behead or hang, if the Fancy takes them; whereas the *Excellencies* of *Flanders* and *Brabant* are but simple Gentlemen, who have no more Power over their Vassals than what the Gentry commonly have in all Countries. It were to be wish'd, for the Happiness and Tranquillity of *Germany*, that all these petty Sovereigns were reduced, by the Emperor, to the same Pass that the Kings of *France* reduced the Swarm of little Tyrants formerly in their Dominions.

To live happy in *Germany*, one must reside in some Imperial City, or in the Dominions of the Electors, who are Princes as powerful, and even formidable, as the others I have just now mentioned are weak and inconsiderable. There are several Electors whose Courts are nothing inferior to those of Kings, and every thing has the Air of Grandeur and Magnificence.

Denmark pretends to Prerogatives over the City of *Hamburg*, which has had several Disputes with that Crown, and would, perhaps, have Difficulty enough to defend her Privileges, did not the Empire protect it as an Imperial City, and oppose the evil Designs of *Denmark*.

The Burghers and Merchants of this City are very polite; their Application to Commerce does
not

not take them off from the Duties of the Gentleman. They love, and even cultivate, Arts and Sciences; and many of them unbend their Minds from the Weight of Business, by the Amusement of good Books. They have in this City a good Number of Libraries, in which are many curious and well chosen Books; and the greatest Poet that ever *Germany* produced, is an *Hamburg*er. Many are of Opinion that *Brocks* may be compar'd with the best of the *French* Poets: But, in my Opinion, this is making a large Stretch. What I wrote thee from *Berlin* about *German* Poetry is, I suppose, by this Time come to hand. I have not as yet alter'd my Opinion, of not allowing the *Germans* the same Rank in Poetry as in Civil Law and Philosophy. Every Nation has its peculiar Talents, and Heaven would have been partial in its Distributions, if, after having granted a *Puffendorf* and a *Leibnitz* to the *Germans*, it had also produced a *Moliere* and a *Boileau* among them.

As to *Leibnitz*, I have heard a particular Anecdote of him in this Country. That illustrious Philosopher had a Bastard, whom he employed as his Secretary, and put great Confidence in him. His Name was *William Dinniger*. *Des Cartes* was also a little liable to the Frailties of the Flesh, for he had a Daughter by his Mistress *Francina*, who died young, by which he was disappointed of the Pleasure of bringing her up, which he regreted mightily.

I am not at all scandaliz'd, when I see the greatest of Men liable to little Failings, for, as they are Men, 'tis but natural that they have a Trial of every thing that appertains to the human Nature. I even respect the Fruit and Issue of their Frailty. *Leibnitz's* Bastard, if he had but resembled his Father, wou'd have been dearer to me than the lawful Son of a *German* Prince, who has no-

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thing to boast of but his Descent. Nay, further, I believe I should have preferr'd the Bastard of the Philosopher to the Prince himself, had he been as learn'd, and as virtuous as his Father.

This Opinion is not peculiar to me, having been maintain'd by a great many ingenious Men. "Not long ago, says a *French* Author *, this "worn out frivolous Question was propos'd in a "celebrated Company, viz. which was the greatest Man in the World, *Cæsar*, *Alexander*, *Tamerlane*, *Cromwel*, &c. ? One of them made "Answer, that, without Dispute, *Sir Isaac Newton* was the greatest Man: And he certainly "was in the right. For if true Greatness consists in having received an extensive Genius from "Heaven, and making use of it to enlighten himself and others, such a Man as *Sir Isaac Newton*, "who is hardly to be found in ten Centuries, is "really that great Man; and those Politicians, "those Conquerors, of which there have been "some in all Ages, are commonly but illustrious "wicked Men."

Nothing can be added to this short Panygerick upon Learning, and the good Use of it. What is it to me, a Native of *France*, *England*, or *Holland*, that a *German* Prince has a splendid Court, that he keeps a good Table, has a numerous Train of Courtiers and Domesticks? what am I the better for it? and what Advantage is it to *Europe*?

Of what Service is it to Society, that Princes give to some of their Favourites such vast Presents that they may acquire the Character of being generous?

How many Calamities are owing to the vain Ambition of some Sovereigns, who are for enlarging their Dominions, by invading those of their Neighbours? How many wretched Mortals has it not con-

* *Voltaire's* Letters concerning the *English*, Page 79.

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condemn'd to Death? How many Victims has it not sacrificed to Envy and Jealousy? How many Men has it not undone, purely that one might have the pompous Title of Conqueror? What! can there be any Madness equal to that of bestowing the Name of *Great* upon a Mortal, born to make all his Subjects miserable?

'Tis impossible for a Sovereign to come up to the Glory of a *Newton*, or such other Philosopher of equal Reputation, but by rendering himself the Father of his People, and in procuring them all the Happiness in his Power: He then becomes useful to Mankind, and imitates the Philosopher. The Prince and the Scholar are equal in Merit; the one informs the Understanding, and improves the Judgment, and the other procures and maintains the Tranquillity which is so necessary to the Welfare of Society, and the Advancement of the Sciences.

The Magistrates of *Hamburgh* endeavour, by their wise Conduct, to put these Precepts in Practice. They make it their Business to encourage all the Arts which they think may contribute to render the People easy; and, as most of them have travell'd in their Youth, they make use of what they have seen of most Advantage in foreign Countries, and appropriate it to their own.

All the *Germans*, in general, are great Travelers; but some of them don't know how to make so good a Use of their Travels as the *Hamburghers*. One half of the Barons, and petty Gentry, that travel into divers Parts of *Europe*, only bring home the Names of what Towns they saw: 'Tis enough for them to have cut some Figure at *Paris*, *Rome*, *Madrid*, or *London*. Upon their Return home, they find Means to make their unfortunate Vassals pay back the Money they have foolishly squander'd. Wo be to the poor *Germans* when their

Lords or Masters happen to be caught by some Opera Girls at *Paris*; every Jewel, every Present, bestow'd upon the greedy Mistress, does them as much Harm as the Hail that destroys the Fruits of their Fields.

The meaner Sort of People at *Hamburg* dread no such Disasters, their Liberty insures their Tranquillity. They work for themselves, and are not afraid of being obliged to pay for the Extravagancies of a young giddy-headed Fool. It were to be wished, that, being content and satisfy'd with their Privileges, they were so prudent as not to abuse them, and that they would keep within the Bounds of a wise Subjection to their Magistrates. But they make an ill Use of their Liberty, and nothing is so insolent as the Populace of *Hamburg*. They often fail in their Duty even to those whom they own to be vested with the Sovereign Power, and the Magistrates have often enough to do to prevent Disturbances from a People always ready to mutiny.

The City of *Hamburg* has a dangerous Rival in its Neighbourhood, viz. *Altena*, which rises insensibly, and becomes every Day more and more considerable. Nothing can exceed the Jealousy that reigns between the Inhabitants of these two Towns. And so far is it from being like to diminish, that it will rather increase if *Altena* continues to flourish.

The *Hamburgers*, as well as the *Germans*, love good Cheer, if we may believe *Montagne*. The *Germans*, says he, make no Difference in Wines, but drink of every Sort with equal Pleasure, their Business being more to swallow than to taste. To drink only at Meals, after the French Fashion, and then but moderately, is to be too abstemious in the Use of Bacchus's Favours: No such trifling Way can please the God of Wine: He loves long and constant Service*.

Since

* *Montagne's Essays*, Lib. II. Cap. II.

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Since *Montagne's* Time Things are upon a different Footing in *Germany*. They still drink there; but so far are they from esteeming Drunkenness a Virtue, that they're not far from thinking, it a Crime*. Formerly a Man was under a Necessity of drinking to Excess, or to be look'd upon with Contempt; but now, even in Feasts, every body is left at Liberty to drink more or less as they please. The Women of Quality drink very little Wine; and many of the *German* Women are very sober, compared to the *French* Women. After this, it can no longer be doubted but that Time changes the most ancient Customs; and when a Man reflects how the *Germans* are reclaimed as to Drunkenness, he will not think it impossible for the *Jesuites* to be cured of their Ambition. Nothing less than so convincing an Instance is necessary to give Hopes of so unexpected a Conversion.

There is sometimes a Company of *French* Comedians at *Hamburg*, as there is also in most of the Courts of *Germany*. I applaud their Judgment in this Point, because the *French* Theatre really seems to be the best in *Europe*. In all the Countries in which I have been, and where good Taste prevail'd, I never miss'd seeing a *French* Comedy, and an *Italian* Opera, which seems to fix the Merit of the Theatres of these two Nations.

They have a *German* Opera in this City, the Musick of which is in the *Italian* Taste. The Composers of the Pieces that are play'd have been long at *Rome*, but the *German* Words have not that Softness which the Harmony of Musick requires. The Actors are far from arriving at the Perfection of the *Italian Virtuosi*, having neither their Taste nor Voice: However, the *German* Opera pleases all those

* This regards only the Men of Quality and Burghers; for, as to the common People, they drink now as liberally as they did in *Montagne's* Time.

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those who mind nothing but the Goodness of the Musick.

Farewel, my Friend, may the God of our Fathers crown thee with Riches and Prosperity. I think of leaving this Country very soon, and of going for *London*.

*Hamburgh, *****.*



LETTER CXVIII.

JACOB BRITO to AARON MONCECA.

THIS is, in all Appearance, the last Letter that I shall write thee from *Madrid*. I'm preparing to go speedily for *Lisbon*; and the Business I had in this Place being now entirely finish'd, I divert myself with visiting the private Libraries of rich Men, and those of the Convents, which I find so poor, and so ill sort'd, that I, in a manner, lose all my Trouble. They contain mostly some few Books of Divinity, some Poets, and a great Number of Romances. We see none of those Books here that have restor'd good Sense to the World, and enabled the Understanding to make use of the Light of Nature. Instead of *Newton*, *Des Cartes*, *Gassendi*, *Locke*, *Bayle*, *Mallebranche*, &c. we find a great Number of School Philosophers, whose Writings are but Compilations, as voluminous as they are indigest-ed, of strange Visions.

Sound

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Sound Philosophy is an entire Stranger in *Spain*. The *Inquisition*, its most inveterate Enemy, persecutes whoever attempts to enlighten Mens Understandings. It has too much Interest in keeping Mankind in Ignorance, not to punish those who would endeavour to clear the Mist that dims their Eyes. The *Spaniards*, 'tis true, are permitted to discharge all the Animal Functions, but they are expressly forbid to think. Every Mortal that dares to broach an Opinion which the Monks don't approve of, is sure to be imprison'd for Life. The unfortunate *Galileo*, at the Age of fourscore, groan'd in the Prisons of the *Inquisition*, for having demonstrated a Thing of which every true Philosopher is now fully satisfied *. There was a Time when all the *Nazarene* Pontiffs declar'd all those Hereticks, who maintain'd that there were *Antipodes*. Poor *Virgil*, Bishop of *Saltzbourg*, was not he formerly persecuted by Pope *Zachary*, and by the Archbishop *Boniface*, for presuming to support that abominable Error? But, happily, some more than two Ages ago, *Christopher Columbus* has baffled this pretended Article of Faith.

The *Spanish* Libraries are little better furnish'd with modern Historians than with Philosophers. A Writer must conform himself to the Superstition of the Country: And thou'lt readily conceive, that a true History cannot appear in a State where the Historian is obliged not only to praise the worst Actions of the Monks, but even to omit whatever may be displeasing to them. They have, however, some who deserve the Esteem of good Judges, but they are restricted to a small Number. *Antonio de Solis*, Author of the History intitled, *The Conquest of Mexico*, is one of the chief. His Work might vie with *Tacitus*, *Salust*, and *Titus Livy*, had he but left out a Multitude of Miracles which he relates,

* The Motion of the Earth.

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lates, and pretends were wrought in favour of *Fernando Cortes* and his Companions (who were, nevertheless, the greatest Villains in the Universe) and if he had not too often exaggerated Things in their Favour. He speaks very confidently of a certain Monument which was cover'd by a miraculous Cloud for several Days *; and whatever Genius he was Master of, yet could he not shake off the Prejudices of his Nation, nor hinder himself from giving too much Credit to Monkish Superstition.

Sandoval is also a pretty good Author, but he neither had the Genius nor Merit of *de Solis*; he is less exact, and far more superstitious. For Instance, he gives a long Detail of the Miracles that happen'd during the Battle in which *Charles V.* gain'd a Victory over the Protestants of *Germany*, and reports, as a certain Truth known to all *Europe*, an absurd, ridiculous Story, viz. That during the Combat, the Sun appear'd red as Blood, not only through all *Germany*, but also in *France* and *Italy*. It were to have been wish'd, for his Sake, and for the Dignity of the History he wrote, that he had spoke of this Fable as the Duke d'Alba, when *Henry II.* King of *France*, ask'd him News of this pretended Miracle at *Paris*. Pardon me, Sir, said this prudent General to him, *if I can't satisfy your Curiosity, I was so taken up that Day with what was doing upon Earth, that I had no Leisure to consider what pass'd in Heaven.*

The same Duke, during the Revolt of the *Netherlands*, had sent his Son to besiege *Harlem*; but he met with so great Difficulties, that, losing all Hopes of taking it, he wrote to his Father, that he did not believe he could execute his Orders. I order'd you; answer'd the Duke, *to make yourself Master of Harlem. If you won't obey me, I will*

* A Cross erected by *Ferdinando Cortes*.

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go myself, gouty as I am, and continue the Siege; and if my Distemper hinders me from acting, I will send to Spain for Donna Irus, your Mother, and my Spouse, to come and make herself Mistress of Har-lem: For I will never suffer that a Town attack'd by my Son shall be taken but by him or his Parents.

These two Passages, my dear Monceca, have made me lose Sight of the *Spanish* Historians; but I now return to them.

Anthony de Herrera is one of the best among them, and has compos'd a good History of *America*. The *Spaniards* have done all that they could to suppress it, because he has painted, in too natural Colours, to their thinking, the horrid Cruelties they have so inhumanly acted in the *New World*. *Don Bartholemi de las Casas*, another of their Historians, has done the same Thing, so much the more praise-worthy in so far as he was a Clergyman, nay even a Monk; and that, in spite of these two Characters so little favourable to History, he has courageously rais'd himself above the cruel Prejudice of the Monkish Race against those who have the Misfortune to think differently from them. The Sincerity of these two candid *Spaniards* has render'd their Works very scarce; but they are translated into several Languages.

Mariana, the *Jesuit*, has writ a very good History of *Spain*. At first he compos'd it in *Latin*, and afterwards translated it into *Spanish*, but without subjecting himself too servilely to his Original. This Work is one of the best of its Kind that has appeared in these later Times. An equal Majesty appears through the whole, and the Author is neither too lavish, in those fine Parts that afford him a large and ample Field to display his Eloquence, nor can he be said to flag in those which are less capable of being set off in a beautiful Stile; and even the Enemies of the Children of *Loyola* have
acknow-

acknowledged that *Mariana* was a great Historian. A Protestant has made no Difficulty to say, that he surpassed all the modern Historians who had writ in *Latin*, not only for his thorough Knowledge of the *Spanish* Affairs, but also for his Eloquence, the Simplicity of his Stile, and his Facility of Expression; but the same Author accuses this *Jesuit* for blaming the Princes whose Lives he wrote, and for sometimes censuring them too severely *. It cannot be denied but that *Mariana* had very loose and terrible Notions with regard to the Respect due to Sovereigns; and that several of his Maxims, with regard to the Obedience of the People, tend directly to the Overthrow of States, and to pull from the Throne the Kings that sat the most securely on them. 'Tis not in his *Spanish* History that such dangerous Opinions are discoverable, but in another *Latin* Book, intitled, *Of a King and his Institution*. He there stiles *James Clement*, the Murderer of *Henry III.* the everlasting Honour of France, *Galliæ decus æternum*, and endeavours all he can to justify that Monster †. The Parliament of *Paris* order'd this Book to be burnt by the Hands of the Hangman; and the Decree pass'd by that Supreme Tribunal has not only blacken'd, in the Eyes of all honest Men, the Memory

* *Inter Latinos omnibus palmam præripit Johannes Mariana Hispanus, rerum Hispanicarum cognitione nemini secundus. Valuit verò Mariana insigni eloquentiâ, prudentiâ, et magnâ libertate dicendi. Hinc et libertatis studiosissimus in reges suos sæpe est mordax.* —Herm. Conringius de regno Hispaniæ, apud Popeblount censuræ autorum, page 614.

† *De factò monachi (Clementis) non una opinio fuit: multis laudentibus, atque immortalitate dignum judicantibus.*

Mariana de rege & regis instit. Lib. I. Cap. VI.
i. e.

All Mankind (says this *Jesuit*) does not look with the same Eye upon this Action of the Friar (*Clement*): Several thought it worthy of Immortality, and the highest Praise.

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mory of *Mariana*, but also that of all the *Jesuites*, who have but too often put in Practice the Opinions of their Brother.

Among the Crowd of Authors who have amused themselves in composing Romances, the illustrious and ingenious *Michael de Cervantes*, Author of the *History of the renown'd Don Quixote de La Mancha*, deserves the first Rank. The Works of that ingenious Writer have been, and will for ever be, the Admiration of all *Europe*, and yet he is not absolutely free of the Failing peculiar to his Nation; and, being born a *Spaniard*, it was necessary he should pay a Tribute to Superstition. He founds the Intrigue of one of the most charming Episodes of his Book upon the Conversations of a *Turkish* Woman with *Lela Maria*; and the *Madonna* (very needlessly brought in there) comes every Night to order her to go to *Spain*.

Matthew Aleman, Author of the *Life of Guzman d'Alfarache*, though inferior to *Cervantes*, writes nevertheless in a pure, natural, amusing and instructive Manner; and his Romance may even be of more Use, since, by painting in the strongest Colours the Errors and Disorders of civil Life, he makes it plainly appear, that in the End they must turn out in a very villanous Shape. I'm unwilling so much as to mention the *Life of Lazarillo de Tormes*, the *Adventures of Mark d'Obregon*, and twenty others of the same Kind, because they only contain the Lives of Beggars and Wretches, just as an infinite Number of sorry little *French* Romances are, composed with a View of telling certain foolish, imaginary Adventures, with an Appearance, forsooth, of fine refin'd Sentiments.

There's no Country in the World where they have made more Romances than in *Spain*, but there is none also where they have composed so many bad. To be convinc'd of this, we need only cast

our Eyes upon the ingenious and judicious Criticism that *Don Quixote's* Curate makes of them, and remark how many of them he committed to the Flames, when he was making a Survey of the unfortunate Knight's Library. Scarce four or five, of the considerable Number he had, escap'd the secular Arm of the Barber and the Maid Servant. *Amadis de Gaul* is of the Number of those that were spared, and the Curate gives it the Praise of being the very best of its Kind. *I've been told by People of Knowledge*, (said he) *that 'tis the best Book we have of its Kind*. But for one Romance that escaped, how many others were thrown into the Fire? *Espancian Son of Amadis*, *Amadis of Greece*, *Don Olivantis de Laura*, *Florismart of Hyrcania*, the *Chevalier Plater*, the *Knight of the Cross*, the *Mirror of Knighthood*, *Bernardo del Carpeo*, *Bernardo des Roncesvalles*, *Palmerin d'Oliwa*, were all, without Mercy, precipitated into the burning Pile. *Palmerin of England*, and *Tiranto the White*, were the only two that had the same good Fortune as *Amadis de Gaul*, the former as a Master-piece worthy to be preserv'd in a Box as precious as that which *Alexander* found among the Spoils of *Darius*, and which served to enclose *Homer's* Works; the second, a very diverting Book, and an excellent Antidote against the Spleen.

The *Spaniards* have almost as many Poets as Romance Writers, but their good Authors of that Kind are still scarcer. The ten Books of the *Fortune of Love*, composed by *Antonio de Lofraso*, a Poet of *Sardinia*, are full of Wit and Spirit. The *Eclogues* of *Don Lopes de Maldonat* may be put on a Level with *Virgil's*, and have no other Fault but that they are a little too tedious and prolix. His Songs seem to have been dictated by Love, and his Verses of Gallantry are equal to those of *Anacreon*. The *Arancana* of *Don Alonso*

de

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de Hereilla, the *Austriada* of *Juan Ruffo*, and the *Montferrat* of *Christopher de Virves*, are, in the Opinion of *Michael de Cervantes*, the best Poetry that ever appear'd in *Spain*; and this Author was in the right; for, to speak Truth, those Pieces are not inferior to any of the greatest Poets.

Don Lopes de Vega has wrote such excellent Comedies, that the great *Corneille* said he would have given the two best of his Tragedies to have been Author of the *Menteur*, i. e. *Liar*. Thou knowest that it was from the *Spanish* Original the *French* Poet compos'd his Piece.

These, my Friend, out of so many Volumes that the *Spanish* Libraries consist of, are the only Performances that deserve the Esteem of Judges. We might subjoin the Works of *Balthasar Gracian*, were they more natural and less perplex'd. This Author has certainly very good Things, particularly in his *Criticon*, and his *Homme de Cour*, (i. e. *Courtier*) which are, in my Opinion, his two best Pieces; but in them, as well as in his other Writings, we find unnatural Ideas, and Expressions too stiff and affected.

The Divines hold the first Rank among the *Spanish* Writers, but they have been so often disparag'd, and thou thyself knowest so well the Chaos of Impertinencies which their Works are stuffed with, that it would be entirely needless to enter upon a particular Detail of the Books with which they have plagued the Publick. I don't think 'tis possible to make them more ridiculous than the illustrious *Pascal* has done, who has given several of them a mortal Blow; and all *Europe* is persuaded, since his *Provincial Letters*, that the most absurd and most extravagant Questions are what the greatest Part of those Authors have applied themselves to.

L 2

I look

I look upon the *Spanish* Divines, in general, to be a Set of Men whom all the Hellebore of *Anticyra* could not cure * : They are accustomed, from their first Beginning, to study to feed upon nothing but Chimeras ; and their Brain is so disorder'd, that it would be easier to bring the Hero of *Michael de Cervantes* to his right Senses, than a Man infatuated with the Maxims of *Sanchez*, *Suarez*, *Escobar*, *Tambourin*, and others such as these.

Consider, pray, what enormous Crime it would be in *Spain* should one assert publicly, that all the Books of Knight-Errantry put together are not so pernicious as one single Scholastick Divine, to distract the most healthful and sound Brain. I would almost sooner chuse to be accused of the most heinous Crimes, than to lie under the Imputation of having advanc'd such a Proposition. The Fire would no doubt be my Reward, and I should be detested by all the People ; for the Veneration of the Inhabitants of this Country is so great with regard to every thing that comes from the Hands of the Monks, that they are the first and keenest to deify the Chimeras and foolish Fancies that are told them.

The *French Nazarenes* have many Divines, but their Manner of Writing is entirely different from that of the *Spaniards* ; they are careful not to insert any thing in their Works that has the least Tendency to Extravagancy ; And if sometimes they discuss Matters that they don't very well conceive, the Circumspection with which they express themselves, and the moderate Terms which they use, binder them from committing such Blunders as the *Spaniards* are guilty of ; so that there's as great a Difference between a Doctor of *Sorbonne* and a Doctor of *Salamanca*, as between a grave Historian

* *Tribus Antyciris caput insanabile.* Horat. Art Poet.

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Historian and a *Persian* Poet. The first explains doubtful Things in a modest Manner; he has Recourse, on many Occasions, where he can't produce Demonstration, to the Weakness of human Understanding, and submits his Difficulties and Doubts to the Direction of Heaven, when he cannot understand the Reason of them: The second, like the *Persian* Poet, gives into monstrous and ridiculous Notions; he must, forsooth, know and explain every thing, and, not content with the Difficulties that occur in his Religion, he forms new ones to himself, which he resolves in a ridiculous Manner, enough to destroy the strongest and best establish'd Faith.

Adieu, my Friend, and may the God of our Fathers preserve thee.

*Madrid, *****.*



LETTER CXIX.

ISAAC ONIS to AARON MONCECA.

I Did not receive thy Letter from *Amsterdam*, about the Difference of Languages, till some Days after I had answered thy former Letters. They who think that the *Hebrew* is the first, and consequently the most ancient, of all the Languages, appear to me not to be ill grounded in their Opinion. For the same Reason, I think, it may be asserted, that we owe the Invention of Letters to the Patriarchs, and that 'tis without

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Foundation that the *Greeks* and *Romans* have ascrib'd them to the ancient *Phœnicians*.

It must be own'd that *Greece* was obliged to the celebrated *Cadmus* for the Art of Writing; But, long before that, the *Hebrew* Language and Characters had arrived at Perfection; and in the Time that *Moses* wrote in *Hebrew*, the *Greeks* were still a barbarous People, such as those that have been discover'd in *America* about two Ages ago. Some Writers have pretended, that *Cadmus* was an *Egyptian*, and not a *Phœnician*; but this Uncertainty makes nothing with respect to the Case in hand. 'Tis still certain that the *Greeks*, before him, knew not the Use of Characters, and therefore we must look somewhere else, than among them, for the Invention of Writing. The Names which *Cadmus* gives to the Letters are the same as those of the *Hebrew* Alphabet. It follows therefore from this, that the Characters were already well known. But the Sense which the *Greeks* had of the Benefit they received from their first Master, induced them to ascribe to him the Glory of having invented those very Letters which had been long in Use among the *Hebrews*.

The *Romans*, who were indebted to the *Greeks* for the Arts, Sciences and Fables, adopted the Opinion which attributed to *Cadmus* the Invention of Writing. *Lucan*, confirming this Opinion among them, effectually transmitted it to Posterity: And they who did not give themselves the Trouble of searching into the Bottom of this Affair, gave implicit Faith to that Author's Decisions. The elegant and happy Manner in which he express'd his Thought, and the excellent Translation of his beautiful Verses by another able Pen, have also contributed very much to establish this Opinion, and to make it common. There are few Men who

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who have any Pretence to Learning that know not by Heart this Passage of *Lucan* :

*Phœnices primi (fame si credimus) ausi
Mansuram rudibus vocem signare figuris.*

i. e.

*If Fame tells Truth, the Phœnicians were the first
that ventur'd to make dumb Characters speak.*

There are few *Frenchmen* that are ignorant of these Verses of *Brebeuf*.

*C'est de lue que nous vient cet Art ingenieux,
De peindre la Parole, & de parler aux Yeux;
Et, par les Traits divers de Figures tracées,
Donner de la Couleur & du Corps aux Pensées.*

i. e.

*'Tis to him we owe the ingenious Art of painting
Speech, and speaking to the Eyes, and, by the differ-
ent Shapes of Figures drawn, of giving Colour and
Body to the Thoughts.*

Thus the most glaring Errors often find general Credit with Men, and are receiv'd as certain Truths. None, in my Opinion, has refuted this false Opinion so well as a learn'd *Nazarene Doctor*. *What* proves to a *Demonstration* (says he) that it was not the *Greeks* who gave the *Alphabet* to the *Hebrews*, but that the latter gave it to the former, is, that those Names in *Greek* signify nothing, and have a Signification in *Hebrew*, as *Plutarch* observ'd: Consequently they are barbarous Terms with regard to the *Greeks*, and natural to the *Hebrews* *.

Another Proof is, that the *Greeks* making use of the *Alphabet* in *Computation*, when they left off

* See the *Art of Speaking*; or, the *Rhetorick* of *Father Lami*, Chap. XIX. Pag. 106.

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off using some of the *Hebrew* Letters, in order to preserve to the others their Value, they substituted a new Sign in the Place of the ancient Letter suppress'd. For Instance, after having rejected the *Van*, which is the *Eolic Digamma*, and the Letter *F* of the *Latins*, they put in its Place this Mark ς , to denote the Number 6, of which the *Hebrew Van* is the Sign, it being the sixth Letter of the *Hebrew* Alphabet.

These, I apprehend, are plain Proofs of the Antiquity of the *Hebrew* Characters: And, perhaps, it may be suppos'd, that *Adam*, who had been created with Dispositions proper to invent and perfect the Arts, first found out himself the Secret of Writing, and made use of various Draughts to communicate his Ideas; perhaps at first he had but a certain Quantity, and that they were augmented in proportion as Mankind multiplied. This, however, is certain, that we must seek, among the first Patriarchs, for the Original of Writing; and, consequently, it is but natural to suppose, that the *Hebrew* having been the first Language of Mankind, the Characters and Letters of that Language were also the first that were made use of.

The Manner in which the *Hebrew* was writ of old, and which continued even one hundred Years after the Emperor *Constantine* I. is still a further Confirmation of this Opinion. They knew nothing of Pointing, nor was any Vowel distinguished upon the Paper; evident Marks of a Language extremely simple, and which smelt much of Antiquity.

Some *Frenchmen*, with whom I had some Conversation upon this Head while I was at *Constantinople*, seem'd to be much surpris'd. They could by no means conceive how a Word was to be understood of which the half of the Letters were not written; and it was not without much Pains that I made them understand, that the Points, which
stand

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stand for Vowels in the *Hebrew*, are only necessary for the easy reading of those who are not perfectly acquainted with the Language. After a great deal of Difficulty, I made them at last conceive how this might be done, by making them read a Letter written by a Woman, and in which the Spelling was wretched. *You read this Writing*, said I, *without any Difficulty; you don't mind the Superfluous Letters, and you supply those that are wanting without any Difficulty. How happens this? No doubt because the Knowledge of the French Tongue gives you such a Facility, that you scarce see the Want of some Letters, the Superfluity of others, and the wrong placing of almost all. Why will you not allow that the Knowledge of the Hebrew Language gives us the same Advantage, and supplies the Want of Points which with us form the Vowels, and were only invented but when the Jews, our Brethren, had forgot their Mother Tongue, and that there was a Necessity to remedy that Inconvenience, that they might be enabled to read our sacred Books?*

I therefore agree to thy Opinion, and believe that the *Hebrew* Tongue is the most ancient Language, from whence all the others are derived: But I can't be of thy Opinion upon the Impossibility of Mens forming a Language to themselves, if God had not created them, and if they had sprung out of the Earth, as certain Philosophers maintain. I'm very far from favouring such impious Tenets; but I think there's no Harm in saying, that if Men (which is an Impossibility) had been form'd by Chance, they would have contrived some Sort of Language whereby to communicate their Thoughts to one another.

Thou seemest to be of a quite different Sentiment, and think'st it probable, *That, if they could not have understood one another as soon as they were born, far from staying together and uniting to form*

*Societies, they would have wander'd in the Woods like Beasts, and never endeavour'd, by common Consent, to annex certain Ideas to certain Sounds *.*

Thy Mistake, my Friend, may be easily clear'd up, by considering only the Temper of Man, naturally inclin'd to Society, by an innate Instinct. Undoubtedly those new Creatures, whom the Philosophers raise out of the Earth, and to whom they grant the Gifts and Talents of human Beings, would make it their first Business to form Words †.

They

* See Letter CVIII.

† *At varios lingua sonitus natura subegit
Mittere ; & uilitas expressit nomina rerum.
Non aliâ longe ratione, atque ipsa videtur
Protrahere ad gestum pueros infantia lingua,
Cum facit, ut digito, quæ sint præsentia monstrant.
Sentit enim vim quisque suam, quam possit abusi.
Cornua nata prius vitulo quàm frontibus extent ;
Illis iratus petit, atque insensus inurget.
At catuli pantherarum, scymnique leonum
Unquibus ac pedibus jam tum, morsuque repugnant,
Vix dum cum ipsis sunt dentes unquesque creati.
Alituum porro genus alis omne videmus
Fidere, & à pennis tremulum petere auxilium.
Proinde putare aliquem tum nomina distribuisse
Rebus, & inde homines didicisse vocabula prima,
Desipere est. Nam cur hic posset cuncta notare
Vocibus, & varios sonitus emittere lingua.
Tempore eodem alii facere id non quisse putentur ?*

Lucret. de rer. nat. Lib. V. ver. 1027, &c.

Thus translated by Mr Creech.

Kind Nature Pow'r of framing Sounds affords
To Man ; and then Convenience taught us Words :
As Infants now, for want of Words, devise
Expressive Signs : They speak with Hands and Eyes ;
Their speaking Hand the want of Words supplies.
All know their Pow'rs ; they are by Nature shown.
Thus tender Calves with naked Front will run,
And fiercely push before their Horns are grown.
Young Lions shew their Teeth, prepare their Paws,
The Bear's young Cubs unsheath their crooked Claws,
While yet their Nails are young, and soft their Jaws.

The

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They would seriously study to find out Sounds that might help them to convey their Ideas to one another. It would be sufficient that one Person only should give the same Name to a Thing several Times. The Person who should happen to have any Business with him, or the Woman, to whom Nature should attach him, would soon apply that very Word to the same Thing for which it was intended. Two Persons can communicate their Thoughts to one another by very odd Sounds, when once they have agreed what Ideas to affix to those Sounds. 'Tis true, that Men would have had, at first, but very few Words to express their Notions, had they been under a Necessity of entirely inventing a Language: But as 'tis natural to make use of our first Knowledge, they would have perfected their Language in proportion as they endeavoured to explain what occur'd to their Minds.

Besides, a small Number of Terms is sufficient to form the Beginnings of a Language; and when once some primitive Words are found out, 'tis easy to multiply them without any great Alteration or Addition. The Language of the *Georgians* is remarkable for this extraordinary Simplicity.

All the Names derived from the Primitives differ only in this Termination *jani*. If they are Names of Dignity, Offices, or any Art, the Derivatives add *me* to the Primitives; With the Syllable *sa*, which they put before the Name of a Thing, they form a Derivative which denotes the Place of a Thing: Thus *Thredi* signifies a Dove,

The Birds straight use their Wings, on them rely;
And soon as Dangers press, they strive to fly.
Besides, that *one* the Names of Things contriv'd,
And that from him their Knowledge all deriv'd,
'Tis fond to think: For how could that Man tell
The Names of Things, or list a Syllable,
And not another Man do so as well?

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" Dove, and *Sathredi* a Dove-house; *Chueli*,
 " Cheefe, and *Sachueli*, the Place where 'tis kept*."

Thou can't but easily conceive, my Friend, that it would have been very easy for Men, naturally inclin'd to communicate their Thoughts, and endowed with the Faculty of forming Variety of Sounds, soon to invent a Language copious enough to make them capable of entertaining one another, and of forming Societies; and that those very Societies would have contributed afterwards to the Improvement of those different Languages, to which every one would have added new Words, and would have, perhaps, insensibly abandon'd the old ones, as we see it happen in our own Days in the politest States.

Thou confessest thyself, that the *French* now spoke at *Paris* is very different from that which was in Use three hundred Years ago. The Languages which they call *Mother Tongues* would have been formed from this first Language, and the others from these.

Thou seest then that the System of Atheistical Philosophers is only absurd in that they will have Men to be like Mushrooms, that spring up in one Night out of the Earth, and not in their Opinion that Men form'd a Language of their own. 'Tis certain they did not do it, but 'tis as certain that they might have done it.

From the Facility with which Men might have form'd a Language, I draw this Consequence, that *Adam* had perhaps at first no Notion of Writing, and that it was not invented till afterwards, and perhaps even after the Death of that first Patriarch. Nevertheless it might have been known to him, and, by the Help of Reflection alone, he might have discover'd it. Many Philosophers pretend, that *Adam* had Science infus'd into him. For my part,

* See Father Lami's *Art of Speaking*, Lib. I. Cap. VII.

part, I see no Necessity for God's granting him this Gift. I only believe, that he had the Means of cultivating those Sciences of which he had the first Seeds infus'd in him: And 'tis pretty plain, that since Men could have form'd a Language to themselves had they sprung out of the Earth, they might with more Reason have found out Characters to be the Signs of such Language.

The *Americans* had Figures and Marks to signify certain Things. When the *Spaniards* first arrived in *Mexico*, *Montezuma*, the King of that barbarous Nation, sent a certain Number of Writers, or rather a sort of Painters, to meet them, who, by certain Lines and Figures, which they drew upon large Pieces of Callico, describ'd exactly what they saw. This sort of Characters answer'd to the ancient *Hieroglyphicks* of the *Egyptians*, and every Figure stood for one or more Words.

'Tis natural to suppose, that Writing was only invented by Degrees, and that it was improv'd in the same Manner as Language, in proportion as Men were desirous to communicate a considerable Number of different Ideas; and 'tis probable that all the Arts have been produced the same Way. If we are to credit the Fiction of Poets, we owe Painting and Sculpture to a Lady in Love. Her Lover being obliged to leave her for some time, Love put this Stratagem into her Head, to mitigate her Grief for his Absence. She drew with a Pencil upon a Wall the Out-lines of her Lover's Figure, and this uniform'd Shape was the Source from whence Painting and Sculpture sprang. This grotesque Image, the Produce of Love and Chance, was admir'd, and every Woman was desirous to draw her Lover's Portraiture in the same Manner. The Men, in their Turn, were desirous too, to have some faint Resemblance of their Mistresses; and from a Thing that seem'd but a Trifle, they

came at last to animate, as it were, the Cloth, and to make a plain Superficies appear as if it were rais'd.

Without having Recourse, therefore, to *Adam's* infus'd Knowledge, one may find the Source of all the Sciences in mere Chance, and in the natural Desire of Man to find out what may be useful to him, and to bring his Discoveries more and more to Perfection.

Adieu, my dear *Monceca*, may Happiness and Prosperity still attend thee.

Cairo, *****.



LETTER CXX.

JACOB BRITO to AARON MONCECA.

WHEN one has been some time in *Spain*, the Manners of the *Portuguese* give us no Surprise; we're already accustomed to see a People haughty, superstitious, and devoted to the Monks. Upon my Arrival at *Lisbon*, I scarce found any Difference, except in the Liveliness of the *Portuguese* Wit, superior to that of the *Spaniards*; so that they may be call'd the *Gascons* of *Spain*. They have the same good Opinion of their own dear selves, and very near as much Fire and Genius as the Inhabitants near the River *Garonne*; are less serious than the *Spaniards*, but as vain, and perhaps more, And, if we'll take their own Words for it, there's not one of them who would

would not, alone, beat a whole Army of *Spaniards*. *Alexander, Caesar, Tamerlane, Mahomet II. Henry IV. and Charles XII.* were but mere Poltrons compared to simple *Portuguese* Soldiers, who look upon themselves as so many Heroes. The *Spaniards*, as may be easily imagin'd, are far from giving Assent to this surprising Valour. On the contrary, they pretend that one single *Castillian* is enough to put the whole Kingdom of *Portugal* to Flight.

*Et qu'il n'est aucun d'eux, que le cul n'ait fait naître,
Pour regir les mortels, at leur parler en meître.*

i. e.

*The poorest Spanish Don is a Creature blest,
With Pow'r from above to govern all the rest.*

In a Dispute of such Importance, may not one have Recourse to History to decide this Question? The *Spaniards*, for a long Time, gave Laws to the *Portuguese*; and, had it not been for Cardinal *Richelieu*, perhaps *Lisbon* would have remain'd to this Hour subject to *Madrid*. *Philip II.* not only conquer'd *Portugal* in a Trice, but his Successors maintain'd the Conquest for near sixty Years. A terrible Yoke this for the *Portuguese*. 'Tis true, that their Country, compar'd to *Spain*, is so inconsiderable, that there's no judging from thence of their Valour. Be this as it will, there's a terrible Dispute upon this Head. As long as there are *Portuguese*, they will pretend to be braver than the *Spaniards*, and these very probably will repay them in their own Coin to the World's End. 'Tis next to an Impossibility that two Nations, so vain-glorious, can ever be brought to submit even to an Equality betwixt them.

The Hatred and Jealousy that reigns between the *Spaniards* and *Portuguese*, are enough to hinder them from perceiving in their Adversaries the

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most amiable and essential Qualities; and therefore there's no relying on the Characters either Nation gives of the other. We might as well imagine to find a Man's Right and Title in the Memorials of the adverse Party.

When I was at *Madrid*, I was told a Story of an Officer, which may give thee an Idea of *Spanish* Rhodomantades. During the last War, when the *French* enter'd *Spain* to place *Philip* upon that Throne, the *Portuguese*, as thou knowest, were in the Interest of *Charles* III. Count *Atalaya*, who was sent to the Frontiers of *Portugal* with a Detachment of *Germans*, sent a Summons to a *Spanish* Officer, who was intrench'd with thirty Men, to surrender; to which he return'd a Volley of Musket-shot by way of Answer, and defended his Post with extraordinary Valour, but being overpower'd by Numbers, he was forced to yield; and being conducted to the Count as a Prisoner, *Who has taught you*, said this Commander, *to pretend to stand out with thirty Men against four hundred? Are not you sensible that I ought to punish you severely for that ill timed Bravery of yours, which has occasion'd the Loss of several brave Men?* The *Spaniard* having listen'd, with great Coolness, to what the Count said, and nettled at the Manner in which he spoke to him; *Excuse me*, said he, *I did not know I had to do with Germans, I thought I had only four hundred Portuguese to fight with.* The Count *d'Atalaya* thought this Answer very impertinent, and was very much inclin'd to have used this Officer ill: But the *Germans* having represented the Consequences of such Violence, and that the Fear of Reprisal ought at least to be a Protection to him; so he came off without any other Harm but that of indifferent Usage while he remain'd a Prisoner.

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How haughty soever the *Portuguese* may be, they are not a whit the less in Subjection to the Monks, who have still more Authority here than in *Spain*; and the *Inquisition* is also more severe. Wo to those that fall into their Hands! But what will no doubt surprise thee is, that notwithstanding this cruel and severe Tribunal, there's still in *Portugal* a great Number of conceal'd *Jews*, even among the Principal and Richest of *Lisbon*.

I dare not too openly inform myself of Things of this Nature here; for, notwithstanding the Character with which I am invested by virtue of my Commission, I make no Profession of my Religion. For greater Security, I conceal my Sentiments, because the Power of the *Inquisitors* is so great in this Country, that perhaps the Royal Authority could not screen me from their Hatred and Fury. I pass at *Lisbon* for an Envoy from the Republick of *Genoa*. Every body, except the Ministers, believe me to be a *Nazarene*. I thought it was best to trust them with my Secret, to be sure of their Protection in case of Need. Mean time, I make all possible Dispatch in my Affairs, not being easy in this Country; and I thank God that I reckon to leave it soon, not having much now to do. After so tedious a Voyage, I long to return to *Constantinople*, to be with my dear Family; and I make no Doubt but thou hast the same Desire: But since thou canst not return to thy Kindred, endeavour to banish that Thought from thee, which may be a Clog upon the Pleasures thou takest. If thy Travels are more tedious than mine, thou'lt feel the greater Satisfaction when they are ended. The more any Happiness costs, the dearer it is; and I acknowledge, that I should have been extremely sorry not to have made a Tour through some Part of *Europe*. The Inconveniences that attend Travelling are sufficiently recom-

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penfied by the Knowledge we acquire of Mankind, and of their Failings.

Portugal affords but little to a Philofopher who feeks to perfect his Discoveries, the People here being entirely ignorant of what we call *Sound Philofophy*. *Aristotle*, or rather his Commentators, are authorifed in this Country to combat good Senfe and the Light of Nature. *Des Cartes* and *Newton* are reckon'd the Tools of *Satan*, and their Works are look'd upon as the Productions of Hell, or but little better. There are perhaps fome private Perfons who read the Works of thofe Philofophers, but they are very few, and the Monks publickly condemn them.

Though the *Portuguefe* are but bad Philofophers, yet they cultivate the Sciences. There's an Academy at *Lifbon*, compofed of feveral Men very well acquainted with the genteel Part of Learning; and the Liberal Arts are protected by the King, who receives all Foreigners very kindly that are qualified to improve them: And it may be truly faid, that the Sciences are much better cultivated in *Portugal* than *Spain*. But to what Purpose fould one defire the Attainment of them? As long as the Mind is under Captivity and ReftRAINT, there can never be Men of true Learning in *Portugal*. On the firft Discovery, they muft expect the Fate of the unfortunate *Galileo*, and perhaps rot in a Jail. Oh! ye Monks! Plague of Mankind! A Scourge which Heaven, in its Wrath, gave to Men! When will the Deity, in Pity to poor Mortals, put an End to your wicked Race! Did'ft thou know but to what Pitch they carry their Infolence in this Country, thou wou'd'ft be furpris'd at the Blindnefs of thofe who permit and authorife it.

The *Recollets* are reigning Friars here, and the Heroes of Gallantry. Their Sandals are tied with
Green,

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Green, Blue, Yellow or Red, according to the Livery of the Ladies whom they gallant. These Ladies take care to furnish the proper Ornaments for the Reverend Fathers; and there's not one of them but has his fair *Dulcinea*, to whom he makes his Court. The other Monks are no less gallant; and to make any Progress in Amours at *Lisbon*, a Man must absolutely wear a Cowl.

The *Portuguese* are, in general, better turn'd for Trade than the *Spaniards*; and in their Harbours you constantly see a great Number of foreign Ships, particularly *English*, who carry on a great Trade with them; and a considerable Number of *English* Merchants are settled in the Country, and enjoy several Privileges.

'Tis very much the Interest of the *Portuguese* to have a good Understanding with the *English*, and these, I suppose, find it as much theirs to be Friends with the *Portuguese*; the Cause and Principle of which Union is *Spain*: For as *England* would not willingly see *Spain* aggrandizing itself, the Interests of *Portugal* and *England* are consequently the same.

Before the Republick of the *United Provinces* was form'd, the *Portuguese* had much more considerable Dominions in the *Indies* than they have at present. While they were subjected to *Spain*, they lost great Part of the Conquests which they had made in those distant Countries, by the Wars betwixt that Crown and the *Dutch*. Nevertheless, they have still very considerable Settlements both in the *East* and *West Indies*; and *Lisbon* is one of the most trading and wealthy Cities in the World.

The Women in this Country are generally as handsome and well shap'd as the Men are ugly and clumsy. The *Portuguese* are still more jealous than the *Spaniards*; so that a married Woman may rather be call'd a Slave than a Spouse. They go seldom out; and the higher their Rank, the greater

greater their Unhappiness. The Jealousy of the Husbands is so great, that they build Chapels in their Palaces, to prevent their Wives from going to Church. In this they imitate the rich *Mahometans*, who have Bagnio's in their own Houses, that their Wives may have no Pretence to go to the publick Baths.

From the Restraint under which the Fair Sex in *Portugal* are kept, flow a great many Crimes unknown in other Countries. The Heat of the Climate, and Restraint that provokes Desire, make them pass all Bounds; and it very often happens, that a Brother is his Sister's Gallant. The *Portuguese* look upon this detestable Crime as a *Pecadillo*, from which a Journey to *Rome* absolves them; and neither the Length nor Fatigue of the Journey stop their Desires, for, if we're to believe Fame, such sort of Intrigues are very common in *Portugal*. But what's certain, is, that among those that beat Marble on the Stair of St *Peter's* Dome, the usual Pennance for such sort of Crimes, there are ten *Portuguese* for one of any other Nation.

Thou'lt easily judge, that Strangers must be at a Loss in a Country where the Women are so strongly guarded, and where Jealousy is so violent. The only Resource, and a poor one it is, are some pitiful Coffee-houses, and wretched Taverns, in the last of which you may find Crowds of old batter'd Wh—s; and 'tis as dangerous for a Stranger to fall into their Clutches, as it is for one of our Brethren to fall into those of the *Inquisition*. A Man must have Business at *Lisbon*, to be able to stay long in it. Without that, Time sits very heavy upon him, in the Manner that he must pass it there. The *Portuguese* ordinarily keep the House, and rarely go abroad, but when Business calls them; and their Houses are as carefully watch'd as the *Turks* Seraglio's. 'Tis impossible
for

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for a Stranger, let him be ever so lovely or agreeable, to expect to make any Acquaintances in this Country. The very Court has an Air of Constraint and Confinement, and every thing passes with a Gravity directed and regulated by Jealousy. The Ladies make their Court to the Queen in their finest Clothes and Jewels; but they're so well watch'd, that 'tis almost impossible for them to be reveng'd of their Husbands for the Slavery they keep them in.

Nevertheless, 'tis true, that Love sometimes gets the better of all their Precautions, and surmounts all Obstacles. So great Art is necessary for this, and so perfect an Acquaintance with the Maxims of the Country, that 'tis impossible for a Stranger ever to have an Intrigue with a Woman of Rank. 'Tis the utmost that a Man born and bred in the Country can expect.

Farewel, my Friend; may thou be always prosperous, and may Heaven still be propitious to thee.

*Lisbon, *****.*



LETTER CXXI.

AARON MONCECA to ISAAC ONIS.

THOU knowest, my dear *Isaac*, how much I was prejudiced against the *Cabbalists*. Dare I confess my Weakness? Since I have had an Opportunity, in this Country, to converse with a Professor of the occult Sciences, I begin to believe that many Things which I thought
ridi-

ridiculous, are neither impossible nor contrary to sound Philosophy. Not that I approve all that is said by *Paracelsus's* Disciples. But I think that, though the Existence of *Gnomes, Sylphs, Salamanders* and *Ondines* *, be not true, yet there is nothing in the Belief of them contrary to the common Laws of Nature, and that a Possibility of them may be admitted without supposing Things absurd, and contrary to Reason, as most of the modern Philosophers pretend. Here are my Reasons. What Weight they may have with thee I know not.

To deny the Possibility of a Thing's existing, there must not only be Proofs of its not existing, but also that it cannot exist; but I find none of the last against *Sylphs, Gnomes, Salamanders* and *Ondines*. What Impossibility is there in supposing that there may be animate Bodies, of so subtile and delicate Matter, that they are without the Reach of our Senses? We agree that they are not capable of penetrating into the first Springs of Nature, and can only perceive the grosser Parts, and yet we must not from thence pretend to deny, that there are Principles extremely fine, which (if I may so speak) are the principal Artificers of Nature. Why will we then imagine, that there cannot be animate Creatures composed of Matter so small and fine as not to strike our Senses?

Before the Invention of Microscopes, we knew not that in Vinegar there were Multitudes of Worms; we boldly denied that there were little Fishes in the Water that we drink; and yet, for many Years, we have been convinced of the Existence of all these Animals: And therefore, if there's a Number of living Creatures in Water, which,

* According to the *Cabbalists*, the *Sylphs* inhabit the Air, the *Gnomes* the Earth, the *Salamanders* the Fire, and the *Ondines* the Water.

which, with our naked Eyes, we cannot discern, why may not there also be in the Air, and in the other Elements?

But it will perhaps be said, *That these Insects are not hid from us but by reason of their extraordinary Smallness; whereas it is pretended, that the Gnomes, Sylphs, &c. are of the Size of Men.*

To this I answer, That the Size of the *Gnomes* and *Sylphs* is not a Reason of their being visible, provided the Parts of which they are composed be extremely fine and thin. A Space of Air six Foot long strikes the Sight no more than one of a Foot, or of an Inch, and therefore, supposing the *Gnomes* to be form'd of a light aerial Matter, their Stature is not perceptible by us. Let us suppose a Column of those Worms that are in the Vinegar extending from the Earth to the Sky. Our Eyes, without the Help of a Microscope, wou'd not perceive this Column, notwithstanding its vast Extension, because the Parts of which it is composed fall not under our Senses. Thus, though an infinite Number of Atoms fill the Space that lies betwixt the Earth and the Moon, and though all that Space be full, yet to us it appears void, because the Matter with which it is fill'd comes not within the Reach of our Senses. The Reason therefore of the Elementary Beings not being visible is no Argument against their Existence. It suffices to establish the Possibility of their Existence, by proving that there are actually many Creatures animated and existing of which our Senses of themselves can have no Knowledge.

The Moment that it is granted the Air may be peopled with invisible Beings, it will naturally follow, that the Earth, Water and Fire, who are Elements, whose Parts can more easily join and unite, have the Power of producing a Number of Bodies whom God vivifies and animates, and yet composed

composed of Parts so small that they are not discernable by our Senses. *But* (reply the Philosophers) *we have no Idea of these pretended rational Creatures. We know not how they exist. We are entirely ignorant of their Form and Shape, and 'tis ridiculous to admit a Thing of which we have no Knowledge.*

This Reasoning, with all Submission to the modern learned Men, is by no means conclusive. *Have you, may it be answer'd, a more distinct Notion of your own Soul! Do you conceive what a Spirit is? or what Form and Figure it has? No, without doubt, and yet you admit of its Existence. Why then will you deny that of Sylphs and Gnomes, of which you have a less confused Idea than of a Spirit? since whatsoever is material, how small soever it may be, comes within the Reach of human Understanding.*

Mens Faculties are so stinted, that 'tis not only possible we may have no Idea of certain Creatures, but it also may be very probable, that a great Number of Persons, endowed with a competent Knowledge, might nevertheless be ignorant of the Possibility of Animals living in Water. Let us suppose, that a certain Number of Men inhabit a dry, sandy Part of any Country, remote from the Sea and Rivers, and who have nothing but Wells. [*The Thing is not impossible; for in many of the Deserts of Arabia, there are nothing but some Wells dug by the Bedouins.*] These Men would certainly have no Idea of Fish, if they had never heard of them. They would look upon it as a most absurd Thing to suppose, that any thing can long live in Water, because they would see Land Animals, thrown into it, immediately die. I ask, If the Fish would less exist? and if the Reasonings of such People would destroy the Fish in the Sea and Rivers?

'Tis

'Tis the very same with respect to the Philosophers who deny the Possibility of *Sylphs* and *Gnomes*. They know not what passes in the Air: Their feeble Eyes represent to them as a great void Space, a large and extended Mass; and they judge of what passes in this Mass by the Ideas which they have of the void Space, which is directly its contrary. For though the Philosophers are persuaded that the Space betwixt the Earth and the Firmament is full of Bodies, or rather, one entire Body, yet their Senses seem to get the better of their Thoughts and Reflections when they deny the Possibility of the Elementary People.

These are the Reasons, my Friend, upon which I ground my Opinion. Moreover, I am as fully persuaded that 'tis impossible for us ever to have any Commerce with the *Sylphs* and *Gnomes*, as I am of the Possibility of their Existence. Far from giving into the ridiculous Stories and chimerical Notions of the *Cabalists*, I maintain, that if there be Elementary People, they cannot render themselves visible to Men, as 'tis absurd to imagine these can find Means to render their Senses so quick and penetrating as to discover what God and Nature have thought fit to keep a Secret. I can't hinder myself from smiling, when I hear a *Cabalist* gravely telling me, that *concentrating the Fire of the World by concave Mirrors in a Globe of Glass, and by using a solar Powder that is form'd in that Glass after its purified from the other Elements, and a certain Quantity thereof taken daily, I raise the Fire within me to such a Degree, that I become as it were of a fiery Nature.*

The Secret of making ourselves familiarly acquainted with the *Gnomes*, *Sylphs* and *Nymphs*, seems to be equally ridiculous. It consists in *having a Glass fill'd with Air, mingled with Water or Earth, to have it exposed to the Sun, then to sepa-*

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rate the Elements; which done, we have a wonderful Medicine for exalting in us the Element that we would have predominant, and rendering our Senses quick enough to discern distinctly the Elementary Beings.

Good Sense and common Understanding discover at once the Folly of this sort of Reasoning, and the Impossibility of any Truth in these *Cabalistical Secrets*: For, suppose I inclin'd to be acquainted with a *Salamander*, what would all the solar Powder I could swallow down signify? Could it ever destroy in me that Quantity of earthly Matter which daily augments by Nourishment? Could it get the better of the Air by which I live and breathe? Suppose I were to swallow ever so much Powder, a Quarter of an Hour after I shall have taken in a great Quantity of Air; and my Lungs, which receive and reject, my Nostrils and Mouth, which give it Entrance into my Body, are declared Enemies to the Element of Fire, which I would have predominant over the rest: And 'tis the same with respect to other Secrets that tend to give in Man a Superiority to one particular Element, and thereby to endow him with the pretended igneous or aquatick Nature.

The Blindness of the *Cabalists* goes still further. They confidently affirm, *That, by applying a little of the prepar'd Earth to the Navel to obtain the Society of the Gnomes, one may easily subsist without Meat or Drink.* The famous *Paracelsus* affirm'd that he tried this: And a Man must be either a very great Fool or Knave to advance such an evident Imposture.

I'm not surpris'd that a *Cabalist* has wrote such Impertinences, when I see Doctors in all the different Religions gravely telling the most absurd Things. How many Fables have been publish'd by our Rabbins on the Subject of the ancient Sa-

tyrs and *Fauns*? Rabbi *Abraham* imagin'd, that they were rational Creatures, but imperfect, because God was prevented from giving them the finishing Touch, by the Approach of the Sabbath Evening. Among the *Nazarenes*, *Tertullian*, *Justin*, *Lactantius*, *Cyprian*, *Clemens* of *Alexandria*, and *Athenagoras*, fancied that these *Fauns* were Angels transform'd into this Shape, for the Crime they committed, when God threw so many of them into Hell, and concluded that this Fall of Angels was owing to their Desire after Women. The Pagans push'd this Error still further, by making Divinities of these *Fauns*.

'Tis impossible that a Philosopher, who makes use of his Reason, can adopt any one of these different Sentiments, all equally absurd, and contrary to the Light of Nature. 'Tis more than probable that the *Satyrs*, such as the Ancients describ'd them, never existed, and that the useless Dissertations made upon the Subject of those Animals have been taken from the Ideas of some Painter or Poet, who created all these imaginary Beings. I would have People, before they attempt to account for a Thing, first examine seriously if it actually exists, or ever did. *Des Cartes* has given us a long Dissertation of the perpetual Lamps found in the Tombs of the Ancients, and the Falsity of this Fact has been made appear in the Sequel. *Democritus* puzzled his Brain for several Days to find out the Reason why Wooll grew on the Figs in his Garden, and made a Discourse upon it, which not only pleased himself, but all his Friends; but it happen'd that his Maid found out a Reason which was more convincing, and which gave a terrible Blow to the Philosopher's Pride, who had lost both his Time and Labour. I fancy the ancient *Fauns* resembled *Democritus's* Figs; and those who have made long Discourses on these Half

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Men, would have been strangely surpris'd if some old Author had come to tell them that they never existed but in his Imagination and Writings.

I will not, however, pretend to affirm, that what has been reported of the *Fauns* is mere Fiction, without any Foundation, because I do really believe their Existence possible. We read, in the Life of *Paul* the Hermit, written by *Jerome*, a famous Doctor among the *Nazarenes*, and in that of *Anthony*, another Hermit, written by *Athanasius*, that these Inhabitants of the Deserts had long Conversations with *Fauns*, who had own'd to them that they had a Knowledge of the Divinity*. If Credit is not given to these Authors, let the Incredible look into *Pliny*, and they'll find that, in the *Indies*, *Satyrs* are common. *Plutarch* assures us, that a living Satyr was presented to *Sylla* as he pass'd by *Dyrachium* in *Albania*, now call'd *Durazzo*. The *Roman* consider'd him with Attention, but by no means could understand his Language, which was very rough, resembling the neighing of a Horse, or a Goat†.

This Passage would incline me to believe, that the *Satyrs* spoken of were the monstrous Product of Men with Brute Females; and that, far from having Capacities superior to those of the lowest Class of Men, they had less of the Man than of the mere Animal, incapable of expressing

* According to St *Jerome*, St *Anthony* met with a *Centaur*, such as the Poets describe them; and the same Author affirms, that this Saint saw, in a little Time after, a *Satyr*, such as the Painters represent. *Conspicit (Antonius) hominem equo mixtum, cui opinio poetarum Hippocentauro vocabulum indidit.*—*Nec mora inter saxosam convallem hand grandem, homunculum vidit, aduncis naribus, fronte cornibus asperatâ, cujus extrema pars corporis in caprarum pedes desinebat.* Hieronimus Epistolar, Lib. III. de vita Pauli, primi Eremitæ. See the 4th Letter or Part of the Secret Memoirs of the Republick of Letters, wherein the Wonders reported by St *Jerome* are fully consider'd.

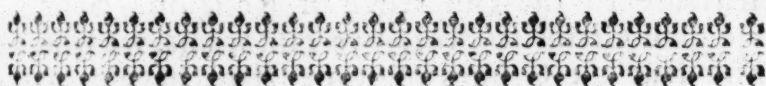
† *Plutarch* in the Life of *Sylla*.

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pressing themselves otherwise than *Sylla's* Satyr. The Pagan Superstition deify'd those Demi-Men. The *Nazarenes* made Angels or Demons of them, and the *Jews* imperfect Creatures: But the Philosopher, seeming to despise the Examination of this Question, contented himself with denying their Existence, that he might not be obliged to explain their Nature.

Farewel, my Friend; I heartily wish thee all Manner of Prosperity.

*Hamburgb, *****.*



LETTER CXXII.

AARON MONCECA to ISAAC ONIS.

I Can't account, my Friend, for that violent Hatred which all Nations have conceived against us *Jews*. Whatever Religion they profess, or in whatever Country they live, they all agree in this Point. The *Mahometans*, *Papists*, *Protestants*, *Arminians*, and *Lutherans*, equally despise us, and carry their Contempt to the greatest Height. For some time I imagin'd that this Antipathy was the Effect of Diversity in Religion: But I afterwards changed my Opinion, when I saw Numbers of quite different Religions have the greatest Esteem for one another. The *Quakers* differ as much as we from the *Nazarenes*; they admit of no Sacrament, not even Baptism itself, and yet the *Nazarenes* neither hate nor despise them.

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We must therefore endeavour to find out elsewhere than in Religion the Cause of the Antipathy that all Nations have of us. The lower Class of Men may indeed be influenc'd by it; but 'tis certain that this is not the sole Cause, and that there must be some particular Reason why we are the Objects of general Hatred; for were it nothing but the Diversity of Religion, why would the *Turks* hate us more than they do the *Nazarenes*, or why should the latter detest us more than *Turks*?

'Tis my Opinion, that we must seek, in the bad Conduct of our Brethren, what we commonly attribute to the Difference of Religion. Should we give Credit to *Nazarene* Historians, we would find that the Crimes of some *Jews* have been of fatal Consequence to our Nation. *Rigord*, Physician and Historiographer to *Philip Augustus*, writes, that in the Year 1180 our Brethren settled at *Paris*, being resolved to sacrifice at the Celebration of the Passover, thought they could not take a more effectual Way of obtaining the Favour of the Almighty, than by immolating a *Nazarene*. They carried off, says he, a young Lad of twelve Years old, named Richard, Son to a rich Tradesman; and, after having miserably tore his Flesh, by whipping, crucified him. This barbarous Action having come to the Knowledge of the *French*, all who were concern'd in this terrible Sacrifice, were condemn'd to die, and all our People for ever banished the Kingdom.

France is not the only Country that has charged us with such Cruelties: The Inhabitants of the City of *Trent* commemorate annually the Death of a little Boy, named *Simon*, a Shoe-maker's Son, whom the *Jews*, say they, carried off, and in a most barbarous manner drew out all his Blood, for the celebrating the Passover; throwing afterwards

afterwards the Carcase into a Common-shore under the Synagogue. The Thing being discover'd, the *Jews* were severely punish'd; and, to this very Day, the *Nazarenes* shew the House where this barbarous Butchery was committed.

I know not what to think when I read or hear talk of such Facts. I am well assured that no such Cruelties are practis'd in our Synagogues now-a-days; and I can scarce believe that ever they happen'd; and yet they seem to be accompany'd with so many Circumstances that prove the Reality, that 'tis almost impossible to disbelieve them. But after all, allowing that there have been some *Jews* so wicked and furious as to be transported to such Excesses, must the Crimes of a few fall upon a whole Nation? Nothing is more easy than to prove, that only a few Mad-men were guilty of such Barbarities, and that the *Jews*, in general, were not only ignorant of them, but that even they who know them were seiz'd with Horror at the very Thoughts of such detestable Practises. And to prove this, let us only consider what the Historiographer of *Philip Augustus* says, viz. *That the Criminals were punish'd with Death, and the rest banish'd the Kingdom.* So that as there were only fifteen or sixteen executed, if more had been found guilty, the *Nazarenes* would not have spared them; consequently the whole Nation banish'd *France* were not chargeable with these Cruelties. Nevertheless, by surprizing ill Luck, that Horror, which the Crime of a few guilty Persons justly merited, reach'd the Whole, and the *French* are persuaded that the *Jews* in general approved of such detestable Sacrifices, and no more is necessary to render them odious to the whole Universe. What can throw a greater Scandal upon a People, than to have been chased out of a Kingdom for such abominable Deeds?

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'Tis not to such Prejudices alone that we are to attribute the Hatred and Contempt of all People towards us. The sordid Avarice and Dishonesty of some of our Brethren, have made us the Objects of mortal Hatred. Thus the Innocent suffer for the Guilty, and many *Israelites*, worthy the Esteem of all honest Men, and faithful Observers of the divine Law, are promiscuously confounded with People whom they infinitely despise, and are the first to condemn.

Our *Rabbies* ought to have made it their Business to give us some Books of Morality, which would have been much more useful, and done us more Honour among the different Religions, than that monstrous Heap of Visions which the greatest part of our Authors have brought to light, and which have only served to discredit our Writers and our Nation. I would have our Doctors confine themselves to the Explication of our Law, and to make the Discouragement of those Vices which they know to reign among us, the principal Object of their Care and Application: That they would constantly set before our Eyes how God is offended with Theft, and how despicable Usury must appear to Men of Honour and Probity. If our Brethren could but be persuaded to be less covetous, it were possible to make them regain the Esteem of all Nations, for why would they refuse it us, if we were worthy of it? I have already shewn that Difference of Religion was no Reason for fixing the Esteem or Hatred of Men. Ours has so great Beauties in it, that the Moment the *Jews* were acknowledg'd to be virtuous, they would at least be assured of the Favour of all the Philosophers, learn'd, and reasonable Men. But the Misfortune is, that our *Rabbies* are so far from endeavouring to combat the Covetousness of the *Israelites*, on the contrary, they are the first themselves

selves of giving Examples of sordid Avarice; so that the Prayers of the greatest part of the *Jews* in their Synagogues agree with what one of the Ancients wrote of the Pagan Devotions: *Do we see*, says he, *any repair to the Temples to beg of the Gods Perfection in Eloquence, or Knowledge in the Secrets of Philosophy? Do they so much as ask Clearness of Reason, or Health of Body?* But, of all those who go to the Capitol before they reach the Gate, one promises great Offerings to the Deity, who is there ador'd, to hasten the Death of a rich Relation; another, that he may find a hidden Treasure; a third, that he may have the Happiness of acquiring an immense Estate *. Such are the Prayers which the greatest part of the *Jews* offer up to God Almighty. They forget that by the Law they are restrain'd from coveting their Neighbour's Goods; and the *Rabbins*, far from putting them in mind of this divine Precept, seem to have quite forgot it themselves; for which Reason that odious Fable, propagated by the *Nazarenes*, of our laying ourselves under an Oath of cheating People as much as we can, ought not to appear extraordinary. They judge of our Precepts by our Actions, and tho' the famous *Leo* of *Modena* has briskly refuted those who have branded us with such an abominable Custom, and has shewn how far we are from following such pernicious Maxims, and from looking upon them as Points of Doctrine; yet notwithstanding the learn'd Writings of that eminent *Jew*, a great many *Nazarenes* are still persuaded that 'tis no Breach of Charity to charge us with this criminal Sentiment.

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* *Quis unquam venit in Templum & Votum fecit, si ad Eloquentiam parvenisset? Quis, si Philosophia Fontem invenisset? Ac ne bonam quidem mentem, aut bonam Valetudinem petunt. Sed statim antequam Limen Capitolii tangant, alius donum promittit, si propinquum divitem extulerit; alius, si Thesaurum effoderit; alius si ad trecentus H. S. Salvus pervenerit. Petronius in Sat. pag. M. 77.*

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We shall never be able to regain the Esteem of other Nations, but by a total Change of our Conduct, and by shewing as much Disinterestedness as we have hitherto shewn ourselves entirely devoted to Avarice: Not that I'm against our Brethrens reaping a moderate Profit in their Commerce: Nothing is more allowable; but I could wish they were more sincere, and that all their Dealings were founded upon Candour and Equity.

When I stood up for this Opinion against Jews who were of a different Sentiment, and who thought themselves exempted from being so very much upon the Punctilio of Honour with Nazarenes, I could never come into their Reasons. *We pay, say they, extravagant Taxes: Princes in many Countries look upon us as so many Beasts, they even sell us the very Air that we breathe, and 'tis by Money alone that we obtain Liberty to live among them. In some German Towns they make us pay twenty Pence an Hour as long as we stay. Is not this a most horrid Imposition? Can we be obliged to act with Candour, where we are so cruelly persecuted? And may we not, with Justice, make Reprisals on the Nazarenes who thus rob us, and enrich themselves with the Spoils of our Industry?*

Whatever Aspect such Reasons may carry at first Sight, yet their Deformity will soon discover itself, in their clashing with that Principle which absolutely forbids the punishing of one Crime by another. Upon this Head the Morality of the Nazarenes excells; 'tis true, they seldom put it in Practice; but one of the principal Maxims of their Religion is, that they are not upon any Pretence whatever to commit Evil: In this their civil and canonical Precepts perfectly agree. Some *Ultra Montane* Doctors, 'tis true, have maintain'd the impious Principle, *That Subjects are absolv'd from their Allegiance, and may revolt against their Princes*

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if they are Hereticks. But these abominable Opinions have been exploded by all Nations, where Superstition hath not stifled all Sentiments of Honour and Religion. The Parliaments of *France* have condemn'd such Books to the Disgrace of being burnt by the common Hangman, and the Univerſities have ſharply refuted them; and yet theſe very Princes (a Thing which muſt ſurprize thee) who have been ſo outrageouſly inſulted, have made no great Account of their Zeal. However, hitherto *France* and *Germany* have rejected, with Horror, all Doctrines that attack'd the Reſpect due to Sovereigns. 'Tis to the Love of their Subjects that many Princes owe the Preſervation of their Glory. While they were lull'd aſleep in their Pleaſures, or ſeem'd to have quite forgot their high Rank, *Rome*, always ambitious, and conſtantly upon the Watch for Opportunities of encroaching upon the Privileges of Kings, made Attempts to overturn their Thrones: But the People took Fire upon the firſt Appearance of any Novelty that might be attended with dangerous Conſequences; and, by checking the Ambition of the Sovereign Pontiffs, gave the Princes Time to recover from their Lethargy, and to defend their Rights.

Farewel, my Friend, may thou be ever proſperous.

*Hamburgh, *****.*

LETTER



LETTER CXXIII.

ISAAC ONIS to AARON MONCECA.

I AM daily more and more delighted in examining the different philosophical Systems, without, however, giving absolutely into any of them. I look upon them all as probable, but don't think that there's any one of them without its Difficulties, and that discovers no weak Side on which it may be attack'd. I leave to certain giddy Heads that Adoration they pay to the Opinions of a favourite Author; and whatever Reputation a Philosopher may have acquir'd, I am not blindly to admire him. I'm of Opinion that there are many Secrets in Nature hidden from all Men, and which the modern Philosophers have as little explain'd as the Ancients.

An *Arabian* of my Acquaintance lent me, some Days ago, a Manuscript, in which I found several entertaining Things, but no great Instruction. The Author pretends, that Men, Beasts, and every living Thing, were produced by the Sea. The first Defect of this System is to be directly opposite to the Existence of a Deity; and as I greatly despise Philosophers who are blind enough not to be struck with this first Truth, so there needs must be something very entertaining and whimsical in this System to engage me to read it with Pleasure. Here follows a short Exposition of the Scheme.

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The *Arabian* Author pretends that a great Change has insensibly happen'd in the Earth, so that all we now see dry was formerly under Water; and he maintains that the Seas and Waters will be insensibly wasted; that the Land will be dried by the Heat of the Sun in After-ages, and, when no more moisten'd, will kindle into Flame, and dissipate itself in Sparks through the immense Space of the Universe.

Such is the System of this Philosopher with Respect to the World in general, and here's what he says of Man and of the terrestrial Animals in particular. When the Waters were consum'd to a certain Degree, and a great Space of Earth remain'd uncover'd, some aquatick Animals used themselves, by degrees, to browse and feed upon Grass in the Fields; that the Man, the Ox, the Horse, &c. coming out of the Water for some Time, return'd thereafter from whence they came, but that in Process of Time, going farther and farther from the Bank, they wholly abandon'd their first Element, and were constant Residents upon the Land, after which they chang'd, by degrees, their Nature, the Sun hardening the Skins of some of them, and making Hair grow in others, different from what they formerly had. He pretends that Habit, which is a second Nature, did in the Sequel render the Issue of these aquatick Animals incapable of living any where but on the Land; and that the greatest part of the Birds could no longer frequent the Waters, not being accusom'd to them from their being hatch'd, except Sea and River Fowl, whose Ancestors had stuck to their Element. That the Case was the same with Men and four-footed Beasts as with Birds, that now fly about upon the Face of the Earth, by degrees they lost the Custom of frequenting the Waters, and changed their Nature.

We see, says the *Arabian* Author, that the Sun intirely changes the Shape and Complection of Men. Children are born white in *Ethiopia*, and their Hair is not short and woollish; they only turn black some Days after Birth, and 'tis a considerable Time before any Thing like Wooll appears upon their Heads. The Reason of which is, that Men still retain something of their first Nature and Quality, and that when they were aquatick Animals, they were intirely white, and had no Wooll in place of Hair, but when they changed their ancient Element, they were more or less changed, according to the greater or lesser Influence of the Vapours of the Earth, and the Heat of the Sun.

All Animals, continues the *Arabian* Writer, still retain something of their first Qualities; there are none of them but what can plunge in Water and live some Time in it. The Ox, the Horse, the Dog, and other Creatures, swim naturally: Man would do the same, did not Fear hinder him from executing the Motions which Nature would teach him. In certain Seas Mermen are still to be found; and the Dutch Historians make Mention of a Girl preserved alive a long Time at *Harlem*, about three hundred Years ago, and who was catch'd upon the Shore just as she came out of the Sea. In many other Countries Creatures have been seen half Men half Fish, and therefore 'tis easy to perceive that the Element of Water is by no means incompatible with a Body organiz'd like to that of a Man, and that nothing but Habit, which they contracted from the Moment of their Birth, of breathing the Air of the Land, hinders them from living in the Bottom of the Sea. This is, in short, my dear *Monceca*, the System of this *Arabian* Philosopher, who, to this Day, is puzzling his Brains to find out new Proofs for establishing it; and having ask'd my Opinion, I told him, very sincerely, that all Systems which attack'd the Existence

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Existence of a Deity, and which suppos'd, as a first Principle of Things, that Chance had reduc'd Matter into certain Forms, must unavoidably be attended with unjustifiable Opinions, and be like a Castle built on Sand, which the slightest Motion must overturn from Top to Bottom. 'Tis very surprizing that Philosophers should not comprehend the Necessity of a Thing whose Existence is plainly apparent to the meanest Conceptions. *The most sublime Truths*, says an *English Author* *, *which the brightest and best cultivated Wits among the Pagans could scarce come at, are now become familiar to the most confin'd Understandings. This opens a large Field of agreeable Reflections to a Man who considers Things as a Philosopher, and who is endued with a Soul capable of being charm'd at the Progress which useful Knowledge makes among Mankind.*

What would all *Greek and Roman* Philosophers say (who, after thirty or forty Years Study, had so imperfect an Idea of the Deity) were they to return back again, and to see the least Student in Philosophy prove, with the greatest Clearness and Precision, that God cannot be material; because every Body is subject to Division, and what is divisible, cannot be God; since there would be as many Gods as Parts, or that the Deity should be composed of Parts not divine.

The Astonishment of these Philosophers would increase, upon seeing the Error into which they had given, when they admitted Matter to be co-eternal with God. They would learn that, if this were the Case, he could not be omnipotent, since he could not annihilate what he had not created; and therefore 'tis equally ridiculous to assert that a Thing, which had no Beginning, can have an End, as to maintain that God exists, and is not omnipotent; so that these *Greeks and Romans*, so

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* *The Spectator*, or modern *Socrates*, Tom. II. p. 157.

loudly cry'd up, would be ashamed not to have made such Reflections, and to have struggl'd so long with Prejudices imbib'd in Infancy, and fortified by Education.

'Tis to us, my Friend, that the whole Universe is indebted for the Knowledge of the Deity. The first *Nazarenes* that notified to the *Pagans* the Unity and Immateriality of God, were *Jews*, who separated themselves from our Communion, and against whom Passion has rais'd the Spleen of our Brethren. Nevertheless, it must be allow'd that they were great Men, who shed their Blood to draw Mankind from Idolatry, and if the Unity of God be universally known, the Obligation is intirely owing to them.

When I was a *Rabbi* at *Constantinople*, I durst not have express'd myself in such Terms. My Brethren would have look'd upon me with Horror, and even tax'd me with inclining to *Nazarenism*; as if we were not to render Justice to Merit wherever it is found, and that Difference in Religion ought to oblige one to disguise his Sentiments, so as to despise Persons truly worthy of Esteem. Let us, my Friend, leave such Weakness to People of low Genius, Ignorants, and Fanaticks, as being the properest Sphere for them, and conclude that, when we see a Man of Genius run into Invectives against Persons of Probity, 'tis not Zeal for Religion, but Ambition, Hatred, or some other Passion, that kindles the Flame. When *Pascal* wrote his *Provincial Letters*, the Defence of *Nazarenism* had less Share than to expose the *Jesuits*; and when these persecuted *Arnauld*, 'twas the Destruction of their Enemy, and not the Good of Religion, they had in View. The Half of the Divines who have wrote against one another, were more satyrical and bitter against the Persons of their Adversaries, than the Errors they maintain'd.

tain'd. 'Tis the same Case with other Writers, when they happen to clash in their Sentiments, they criticize a Work, not because it is bad, but because it is the Production of an Adversary.

When I was in *Germany*, I happen'd to be acquainted with two Authors, who were perpetually praising each other: The one was *Apollo's* Heir, and the other the Darling of the Muses. An unlucky Difference happen'd between them upon the Account of something that one had wrote, and which the other, contrary to Custom, found fault with. This was enough to set them by the Ears: They tore one another to Pieces, each pretending that his Enemy ought to be banish'd from *Parnassus*. In short, they cry'd down, with all the Bitterness imaginable, the very Works they had formerly recommended to the Skies. I could not conceive how they changed so suddenly from one Extreme to another. *Such a Conduct*, said I to one of them, *must hurt you in the Opinion of the World. What Notion can your Readers have of your Works, when they see you now blaming, what you commended not many Pages before? To be sure they will justly conclude, that you praise without Grounds, and censure without Cause. It matters nothing, reply'd the Author, if I can but destroy the Praises that I have formerly given the Man, who has had the Insolence to criticize me, I am satisfied. I prais'd him, while he prais'd me, and when he changes his Note, I'll alter mine; and should he write better than he does, I should swear it was meer Stuff, not worth reading.*

'Tis thus, my Friend, Authors generally treat each other; and very few amongst them commend their Brethren, but upon the Prospect of a suitable Return. In the Republick of Letters, Encomiums are staple Commodities; and I believe in all other States 'tis pretty much the same. When we

flatter one, we expect a Return. Self-love cannot brook a Silence so mortifying to the natural Vanity of Men, and which seems to tell them, they are infinitely inferior to those whom they praise.

I think it may be laid down as a general Principle, that most Men commend from one or other of these two Motives, either that they may be commended, or that they may be rewarded; few, from the sole Pleasure of doing Justice to Merit, are induced to publish the good Qualities of others. People look upon this noble and generous Way of Proceeding as a common Vertue, but if we examine the Thing nearly, we shall find how few there are so disinterested as to put it in Practice.

Take care of thy Health, my dear *Monceca*, live content and happy, and pardon my writing to thee so seldom.

Cairo *****.



LETTER CXXIV.

AARON MONCECA to ISAAC ONIS.

THE *Nazarenes* have a laudable Custom, which I blame our Ancestors for not having observ'd. They travel to the Extremities of the World, preaching a Supreme Being, full of Goodness, Power, and Mercy, and there's no Country, however remote and barbarous, but where they go to destroy Idols, and to insult them upon their very Altars. Did they but observe a little

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little more Mildness, in their Manner of notifying a God, so worthy of the highest Respect, and that their Actions did not often clash with the Excellence of their Doctrine, I should look upon the Missionaries as the most deserving Men in the Universe. Is there, in Effect, any thing more glorious than to be intirely devoted to the Service of an infinite Number of Persons, groaning under the Slavery of Prejudices, and to extricate them out of the Gulf of Idolatry.

Were they who go to enlighten the Minds of these unfortunate *Pagans*, but satisfied to instruct them by the Dent of Reason, and did not employ Force and Violence, the Idolatrous Nations would be much sooner persuaded of the Existence of one only God: But the Cruelties exercised by the *Spaniards* and *Portuguese*, in certain Countries, and which are not unknown to many of these Savage Nations, have inspired them with an insurmountable Prejudice and most implacable Hatred against those who come to be their Instructors. After all, what can an *Indian* think, who knows the Number of Persons that are, from time to time, burnt at Goa? *These People*, says he, *who tell me of a God, good and merciful, daily offer up, in Sacrifice, Numbers of their Fellow-Creatures to this same God, and his Altars are constantly sprinkled with human Blood. They barbarously burn Men of Worth and Probity, who cannot force themselves to believe Things that they think contrary to the Principles of Equity and Reason.* The Pride and Cruelty of Missionaries, in Countries where they have great Power, destroys all the Good the others might do, in Places where they can only use Persuasion.

Thou'lt perhaps ask me, how I, who am a Jew, come to interest myself in the Propagation of the *Nazarene* Faith? And of what Advantage
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it can be to me? My Answer is plain and natural. The Establishment of the *Nazarene* Principles is not what I aim at, but to propagate the Knowledge of the Deity. Thou knowest that my Opinion, as well as thine, still was, that People might be saved in all Religions, provided they were truly vertuous. Now nothing is so prevalent to make Men such as the Knowledge of the Divine Being, when it is not clouded, or in a manner extinguish'd by a Number of incomprehensible and contradictory Doctrines, and Ceremonies vain and ridiculous. We naturally ought to wish the Happiness of all Mankind, and therefore are obliged to the Missionaries who facilitate the Salvation of those sunk in Idolatry, by teaching them to know God, and his Will. There's no Philosopher, let him be of what Religion he pleases, that can think otherwise, unless Prejudice, and the Hatred he bears to those of a different Opinion, intirely blinds him.

It were to be wish'd, that when the *Jews* were dispers'd, after *Titus* had destroy'd *Jerusalem*, they had followed the Maxim of the *Nazarenes*, and had propagated the Law of *Moses* throughout the Universe, instead of making a Property to themselves alone of the Treasures which Heaven had bestowed upon them. 'Tis scarce to be doubted but that, considering the infinite Number of Missionaries that we should have had in all the known World, and the Beauty of the Religion which we should have preach'd, all Nations wou'd have soon embrac'd it; and indeed 'tis very unlikely that they could have stood out against Truths so plain and evident.

The more I consider my Religion, the more glorious and admirable it appears. One only God, the Creator of Heaven and Earth, a Being infinitely wise and potent, who governs the World
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by his Power, and who will punish the Wicked, and reward the Good. Who are the Wicked? Such as do as they would not be done by. And the Good, who are they? Such as not only abstain from doing their Neighbour any Prejudice, but also do him the Good which they wish he may practice towards them, as my Friend the *Monothelite* has elegantly express'd it in one *Latin Line*:

Quæ tibi vis fieri facias: Hæc summula Legis.

That is,

What you from others wou'd expect, that do,
This is the Sum and Substance of the Law.

Here, my Friend, is the Whole of our Religion. All its Precepts are contain'd in these few Words, and all that our *Rabbies* have added, may be look'd upon as useleſs and superfluous. What Mortal is there, endow'd with the least Degree of Reason, but muſt directly yield to the Evidence of these Truths, and give his Assent? I repeat it again, my dear *Isaac*, that had our Zeal been equal to that of the *Nazarenes*, in displaying the Beauty and Holineſs of our Religion, we muſt have drawn over to us an infinite Number of Profelytes, but our Negligence, or rather our ill-grounded Contempt of other People, hath hinder'd us from giving them the true Notions of the Deity. Were we but to think as Philosophers, nothing could give us more Pleasure than to ſee the Miſſionaries ſupply our Defect, and to do a Service to Mankind, which we have diſdain'd to render them.

Several *Nazarenes* have written large Volumes againſt their Miſſionaries, and have attributed to their imprudent Conduct the bad Succeſs of their Deſign; ſuch Reproaches have induced ſome unthinking Perſons to conclude, that all the Miſſionaries have been equally deficient in their Duty.

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But this is a Mistake, and it may be said, without exaggerating, that the Missionaries have done much more Good than Evil. 'Tis true indeed that some have in a Moment destroy'd the Fruit of many Years Labour; however, the Escapes of some particular Persons ought not to affect the Whole. I confess that I could have wish'd none but *French* or *German* Missionaries, bred up in Countries where the Inquisition is in Horror, had gone to the *Indies* and other idolatrous Countries. Violent Measures, except by a few of a certain Order, are very seldom taken by these Converters, and their Mildness gains many more Profelytes than the Fierceness and Rigour of *Spaniards* and *Portuguese*. One of the latter, named *Menezes*, made several Attempts to convert the Inhabitants of the Island of *Zocotora*. The Severity he had exercis'd upon other People where he had an absolute Power, under the Authority and Protection of the King of *Cochin*, frustrated all his Views in this Island. *They fell into a Rage*, says a *Nazarene* Historian *, *at the very mention of their embracing the Portuguese Religion; they had already seen some of these Missionaries in their Island, and protested that they would rather suffer Death than be of the Religion of Men whom they call'd a perverse and infamous People.*

Another Missionary, named *Alphonso Mendés*, ruin'd all that his Predecessors had done. As he was a *Jesuit*, his Enemies made this a Handle to attack the Society, publishing several Pieces, wherein they accused the *Jesuites* in general of doing Harm, rather than promoting the Business of Missions; but they who treat them in this Manner, not only exaggerate, but disguise the Truth; and it must be own'd that the Missionaries of this Order have

made

* Hist. Enquiries and Dissertations upon the Christian Religion in the *Indies*, p. 304.

made a considerable Progress in Countries where they knew nothing of the Deity, and that they commonly behaved with a great deal of Mildness and Discretion. Nay, they have been sometimes branded with too much Condescension and Toleration: But let them do what they will, they can never have the Esteem and Approbation of their Enemies, or stop their Mouths. The disinterested Part, however, of their Adversaries do them Justice, by acknowledging that there have been, in the *Indies*, and elsewhere, good and pious Men of that Order. Here's what a Protestant*, a sworn Enemy to the *Jesuites*, has said, and 'tis not to be suppos'd that he would favour them: *Christianity seems to be better establish'd in China, than in any other Country where the Missionaries of the Society go. The Jesuites have had great Men in this Mission, such as the Fathers Riccius, Martinus, Schall, Verbiest, and several others. It would be highly unjust to rob these great Men of their due Praises. I will not concern myself with the Disputes that subsist between them and other Missionaries. The Jesuites are not perhaps altogether innocent; but are their Adversaries intirely without Byass or Passion, and are they not well pleased to mortify the Jesuites, on account of the bad Offices they pretend to have received from them?*

This Passage clears up the Motives why so many *Nazarenes*, *Papists*, and *Protestants*, have attack'd the *Jesuit* Missionaries; the Hatred they bear to those in *Europe*, has extended itself to the Missionaries of that Order in the *Indies*, who were employ'd in establishing a Belief of the Deity, and have promiscuously condemn'd the Good with the Bad; taxing some with too much Complaisance for the *Chinese*, and others with Cruelty, and confounding the *Indians* with too many Mysteries.

Thus

* Hist. Dissert. and Enq. &c. p. 318.

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Thus they condemn'd, in the first, what they would have had the others practice, and have quarrell'd with the Missionaries, only for the Satisfaction of charging the *Jesuites* with all the Evils that have happen'd.

I confess, my dear *Isaac*, that I have often thought the *Jesuites* were unjustly dealt with upon many Occasions, seldom any Mischief happening in which they are not suppos'd to have a Hand. I'm not a Stranger to their Vanity, Ambition, and revengeful Humour; but I'm sensible that Things are carried too high, and that they are charg'd by their Adversaries with many imaginary Crimes. A *Jesuit*, named *Angelinus Gazæus*, has made some *Latin Verses* upon this Head, which expose, prettily enough, the Folly of attributing all manner of Mischiefs to the Society*: The Sense of them is nearly this:

*The Jesuites first the credulous Eve seduc'd,
And made her give her Spouse the fatal Fruit;
They prompted Cain, by all the Wiles of Art,
To dip his guilty Hand in Abel's Blood*.*

It were to be wish'd that Divines had always imitated this manner of answering to the groundless Reproaches thrown out against them; in which Case, we had not been plagu'd with a monstrous Heap of Books, stuff'd with *Billingsgate* Oratory. I cannot conceive how grave and serious People can take up their Time in writing Invectives against one another. A lively Raillery, such as this *Jesuit's*, carries a greater Sting with it, and exposes more the Ridiculousness of a false Accusation, than

* *Gazæus's Latin Verses.*

*Pomum Marito, Jesuitis credulo,
Porrexit Eva, Jesuitis credula;
Fratrem Cainus, Jesuitis credulus
Occidit Abel, Jesuitis credulum.*

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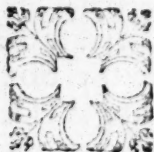
than a long, grave, and pedantick Apology. All the huge Volumes wrote against the *Jesuites* never pinch'd them half so much as the small Volume of the *Provincial Letters*, where *Pascal* makes use of *Horace's* Maxim.

——— *ridiculum acri,*
Fortius & melius magnas plerumque secat res.

Had *Pascal* attempted to refute the *Spanish* Divines with the usual Pomp of Scholastick Doctors, the *Jesuites* would not have fail'd, in their Turns, to have compos'd a great many Books in Defence of their Brethren's Writings, the Consequence would have been no other than rendering the Matter on which they disputed more intricate and confused; and after much Writing *pro* and *con*, very tiresome to the Publick, and which none but the Learned, and some of their own Friends, would have perused; so that the Generality of the World would have been just as wise as when they began to write. But the Case is quite different with respect to *Pascal*; he has, in a very ingenious and satyrical Manner, inform'd all *Europe*, in six Months Time, what all the Universities could not discover in a hundred Years.

Farewel, my dear *Isaac*, and may the God of our Fathers load thee with the best of Blessings.

Hamburg, *****.





LETTER CXXV.

AARON MONCECA to JACOB BRITO.

THY Letters upon the *Spaniards* give me infinite Pleasure, and I could wish that mine were equally satisfactory. Thy Reflections are judicious and just: Only one appears to me to clash with the Law of Nature, and to encroach upon that Equality that a Philosopher allows to all Mankind. Thou condemnest a Custom approved of by the *Nazarene Pontiffs* in one of their Assemblies, which allows every Man, in whatever State he be born, to chuse a Wife for himself. Thou alledgest, that such an Ordinance is contrary to Paternal Authority, and destructive of the Order requisite in States, and of the Subordination so necessary for the Benefit of Society. I confess that, in this Point, I differ from thee, and that I cannot but commend the Prudence of the *Nazarene Pontiffs*, who, reflecting that all Men sprung from one common Father, did not think proper to authorize a chimerical Distinction, which Pride, Sin and Vanity, have, in process of Time, introduced. Besides, what is it to the Good of the State, whether a private Man be more or less rich, if Riches are in the Society? On the contrary, the more they are divided the better Trade flourishes, Equality among the Citizens being the very Basis of Commerce. In States where the

Nobility

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Nobility have extraordinary Privileges, Commerce flourishes less than in others. To prove this, we have but to compare the Riches of private Men in *Holland* and *England* with *French* and *Germans*. It will be soon seen what Profit a Country reaps by putting the different States upon a sort of Equality, and by not allowing a Distinction, which unhinges all the Harmony of Society, and which, by indulging some private Persons, mortifies others to such a Degree that they are not capable of carrying on Trade with that Briskness and Activity which is necessary.

I cannot therefore chime in with that Custom among the *French*, of dissolving Marriages which they think unequal, of separating two Hearts whom Love has united, and who have plighted their Faith at the Altar. This is a sort of Tyranny which favours of the too extensive Privileges formerly granted by the *Romans* to the Heads of Families. The Laws that regulated the Paternal Authority were attended with great Inconveniences; for by giving the Parents an absolute Power over their Children, the Effect of this was exposing several Persons to the Caprice of one. In vain the old *Roman* Lawyers pleaded the Tenderneſs of Fathers to excuse the exorbitant Power with which they vested them. Parents, as their Children, are subject to the Passions and human Frailties. How many Instances can be brought of their hating their Children without a Cause, and of their squandering their Inheritance? How many sacrifice their Families to their Ambition? And how many may we not find who, out of a secret Jealousy lest their Children's Fortune should be better than their own, oppose their Families rising in the World?

'Tis my Opinion, that the Duties between Parents and Children are reciprocal; according to a

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French Poet *, who puts the following Words in the Mouth of an unhappy Son

*Peres cruels, vos droits ne sont-ils pas les notres,
Et nos devoirs sont-ils plus sacrez, que les votres?*

i. e.

*Have you, as Parents, Rights that are not ours?
And Children's Duties bind they more than yours?*

The *Romans*, at last, discover'd how much the too great Extension of Paternal Authority might be hurtful to Society; for which Reason they reduced it into a narrower Compass, by taking away the Power over Life and Death. What terrible Consequences might, indeed, ensue from a Law that subjected a whole Family to the Will of one Man, who often made a bad Use of his Authority?

To conceive how far Fathers might abuse the Right they had over the Lives of their Children, let us only recal to our Memory the Custom which prevail'd among the ancient *Greeks* of exposing their Children. In such Cases where was the Paternal Tenderneſs ſo boasted of by the Lawyers? What Strefs can be laid upon it, ſince it can eaſily yield to the Privation of a Child's Life, purely to ſatisfy Avarice or Ambition, or to augment another Child's Fortune? Do we not, at this very Day, ſee many Inſtances of the Cruelty of Parents, by the Sacrifices they make of hapleſs Daughters to enrich an eldeſt Son? They are condemn'd to perpetual Imprifonment, and, under the ſpecious Appellation of *Nun*, languish in a rigorous Captivity. Can ſuch Barbarities be reckon'd Marks of Paternal Tenderneſs? and do'ſt thou think that the natural Affections of Men is a proper Foundation for

* *Cicillon* in his Tragedy of *Radamiſtus* and *Zenobia*.

for Law? or that the eloquent Discourses of many Orators upon this Subject are to be much regarded?

I am positive, my Friend, that a Law which gives an absolute Power to Fathers over their Children, is, at least, as unreasonable as that which should subject Parents to their Children. In a well govern'd State there ought to be Ordinances fixing the Power of the one, and the Obedience of the other; so that in the most necessary Laws there must be Limits. I'm for the Head of a Family's having all the Authority necessary to inspire Virtue and good Manners into his Children. But, if he should forget that he's a Father, I would not have him vested with the Power of harrassing and tormenting a Number of innocent Persons, who are often guilty of no other Crime but that of endeavouring to get free of an insupportable Yoke.

When we reflect on the Motives that usually induce Parents to oppose their Children's Inclinations with respect to Marriage, we see that they spring from Caprice or Ambition. I have already shewn thee, that it was not just several Persons should be subjected to the Whim of one; and I think I have also given Reasons, sufficiently strong, to prove that Equality among Citizens contributes to the Good of Society. If to this thou join'st the Reflections of a Philosopher, who, not content with looking upon all Mankind as Equals, puts a greater Value upon the Contentment of the Mind, than on all the Treasures of the Earth, thou wilt no longer condemn the Decision of the Assembly of the *Nazarene Pontiffs*, which solemnly declared, that Men ought not to separate Persons united by Marriage.

Marriages founded in Affection are the happiest. Love, says an *English* Author *, *ought to be deeply*
P. 3 *and*

* The Spectator.

and strongly rooted before we enter into that State. In effect, nothing more nearly concerns the Tranquillity of Men than to know thoroughly the Persons with whom they deal. How much more then must it be the Interest of a Husband to know the Character of a Woman, with whom he is to pass the rest of his Days? Upon the Choice he makes depends his eternal Happiness or Misery. One may say of Marriage, what *Virgil* said of Hell, *The Access is easy, but the Difficulty is how to get back again* *. When we're once fairly in, Patience is our only Remedy. How carefully ought one to examine an Action which is attended with such extraordinary Consequences! And how unjust is it not to leave a Person at full Liberty in a Matter that so nearly concerns him? *When the Choice of a Husband or a Wife is left to the Parents, all their Views are confin'd to Interest and worldly Advantages, whereas the Parties concern'd have mostly a Regard to personal Merit. The former endeavour to procure all the Ease and Pleasures of Life to the Persons whose Interest they espouse, in Hopes that their flourishing State may turn out to their own Advantage in some Shape or other; the latter endeavour to secure a constant Happiness* *.

You now see, my dear *Brito*, the different Sentiments by which Parents and Children are influenced, so judge thyself which of them approach nearest to Reason. It would seem to me, that Contentment is more valuable than the Empire of the Universe to one who wants a quiet and easy Life. The *Turks* follow a wiser Course than the *French*, they allow their Sons to chuse among their Slaves her whom they like best, and give themselves no manner of Trouble about Riches or Alliances when Love interceeds. The *Jews*, on the contrary, resemble the *Nazarenes*, who reject the De-

cision

* The Spectator.

cision of the Pontiffs, and even go farther, for they determine how their Children are to be disposed of in their very Infancy, and bind them by Contracts before they've attain'd to the Age of Knowledge; and 'tis surprising that we don't see many more unhappy Marriages among our Brethren than we do.

A Father, who enters into Engagements for his Son's Marriage, can he know the Humour and Character of the Person who is to be his Spouse, since it often happens that she does not as yet know herself? I cannot, truly, hinder myself from blaming those sort of Bargains, and believe that Love, Tendernefs and Sympathy, ought to be the only Motives of Marriage.

In *France*, and many other Countries, a Peasant is much happier than a Man born in a high Rank. The first may dispose of his Heart, but the other, a Slave to Birth, must not yield to the Charms of Love: He must examine, before he loves, if it is consistent with his Dignity, and if he can, without derogating from his Nobility, allow the Object he adores to be lovely. Such Circumspection must be a terrible Clog to one who is not fond of Constraint; and, for my part, I have no Notion of an imaginary Good that would deprive me of the Possession of real ones.

Great Men have got above the Prejudices of the Vulgar: When they found their Hearts touch'd, they sought the Cure in Marriage. They did not think themselves obliged to conform to ridiculous Customs, but rais'd their Spouses to their own Rank. One of the first Monarchs of the World *, as much distinguish'd by the Extensiveness of his Genius as his Dominions, placed, upon the Throne, a Woman of the meanest Birth. His Glory was not in the least sully'd. The whole Universe,

* Peter Alexowitz, Czar of Muscovy.

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Universe, after admiring the Monarch for his political Capacity, contemplated his Conduct with Pleasure in the Affair of his Love, and did not think the Characters were incompatible.

I think there's enough now said on this Subject. Far be it from me to force thee into my Sentiments, if thou think'st them unreasonable: But if otherwise, I shall applaud myself for having stood up against thy Opinion. 'Till I'm resolved upon that, I shall remain in a kind of Uncertainty: And though I don't approve of a boundless Authority granted to Parents, yet I am diffident as to my own Judgment, since I find People of thy Wit and Penetration in an opposite way of Thinking. There are none but Pedants and *Roman Pontiffs* that think themselves infallible. Wise Men and Philosophers are still afraid of being under a Mistake. They are too well acquainted with human Frailty to presume so far on their Capacity as to believe they cannot err. Several have even push'd their Modesty too far, and have run into a kind of *Pyrrhonism* from an Excess of Humility. I think it a little odd, that *Socrates*, after thirty Years Study, should have affirm'd, *that he knew only one Thing, which was, that he knew nothing**. It was scarce worth While to study so long for the Satisfaction of finding Nothing.

Adieu, my dear *Brito*, may you be perfectly happy.

*Hamburgh, *****.*

LETTER

* *Id unum scio, quod nihil scio.*



LETTER CXXVI.

ISAAC ONIS to AARON MONCECA.

TH Y Letter on the different *Nazarene* Sects hath given me an Opportunity of reflecting on those which formerly made a Division in the Religion of our Ancestors. It appears to me, that every Religion, when it first begins to be establish'd, pushes out Branches like a Tree, which, by first throwing out its Roots, and fortifying itself, produces a great many Boughs. In the Beginning these Sects are only simple Sprigs, but they soon grow up to the Bigness of the Trunk from whence they sprung; and, as they increase, it commonly happens that, in proportion, they forsake their first Opinions. Every Founder of a Sect forms gradually his System, to which his Disciples add many Things.

Innovators don't commonly attack received Opinions all at once, but by Degrees. Were they to strike directly at Opinions which are look'd upon as Fundamentals, they would rather alienate the Minds of the People than persuade them. They must be prepared by Degrees, and conducted with Caution, to the Novelties which they want to introduce.

The *Saducees* were first but what the *Caraites* are now. They contented themselves with rejecting the ancient Traditions, and stuck close to the written Law. The *Pharisees*, a People formerly

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as much addicted to Chimeras as my old Brethren the Rabbins are at this Day, and as zealous Sticklers as they for a thousand ridiculous Traditions, were directly opposite to the *Sadducees*. However, so far the latter were founded in their Opinion, and admitted nothing but what was reasonable: But, soon after, the Love of Novelty, and the Pleasure of differing from their Adversaries, led them into the most unjustifiable Errors. From *Caraites*, which they were, they became Infidels and Blasphemers, and gave the *Pharisees*, their Enemies, as great Advantage as they had over them in the Beginning. They deny'd the Resurrection of the Body, and the Existence of Angels; they maintain'd that the Soul was mortal, and that there was no spiritual Being but God alone*. By this pernicious System, they open'd a Door to all sorts of Crimes; the Fear of Punishment, and the Hopes of future Rewards being the strongest Bonds to hold the common People steady in the Ways of Virtue. 'Tis true they acknowledg'd, that God had created the Universe, and that he govern'd it by his Providence, but believed that Rewards and Punishments were only temporal.

Pray, my Friend, consider that the Sects which now divide the *Nazarenes* come pretty near to those that subsisted formerly among the *Jews*. The *Sadducees* were, in *Judea*, what the Deists, whom thou hast mention'd in thy former Letters †, are at *Paris*, and their Belief, as thou must observe, pretty much of a Piece. I would not, however, push the Parallel too far, because we know that the true Deists, that's to say, such as truly respect the Deity, do not reject the Doctrine of future Rewards and Punishments ‡.

* *Joseph. Antiq. Lib. XVIII. Cap. xi. & de bello Judaico, Lib. VI. Cap. xii.*

† Letter IV. Tome I.

‡ See the Writings of the Baron of *Cherbury*.

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Let us pursue the Parallel between the *Jewish* and *Nazarene* Sects. That of the *Pharisees* still subsists, and is, in a manner, the establish'd Religion of the modern *Jews*; for if we except my Brethren the *Caraites*, and a few *Samaritans*, I look upon such as give Credit to the *Talmud*, and the Traditions of the Rabbins, as Descendants of the *Pharisees*. Since the Destruction of the Temple that Sect has swallowed up all the rest, and the *Jewish* Nation has, unhappily, run headlong into all its Whims; so that a thousand ridiculous Chimeras, under the Name of Traditions, have, in a manner, annull'd the holy Scriptures.

It grieves my Spirit when I consider, that, except a small Number of *Caraites*, all the *Jews* wallow, if I may be allow'd the Expression, in the Mire of Error and Delusion. Their Religion, upon the present Footing, is an Edifice built on the Traditions of the *Pharisees*, and not on the Books of the Law. Thou art no Stranger to the Pride and Arrogance of those ancient Doctors. They look'd upon themselves as infinitely above the rest in Piety, and separated from those whom they call'd profane and wicked Sinners, with whom they would neither eat nor drink: For which Reason they were stiled *Pharisees*, from the Word *Pharos*, to separate. They carried, however, their Point, and, by artfully playing the Hypocrites, imposed upon the People, who always were, and ever will be, the Dupes of those who put on an Air of Sanctity.

I find a very notable Resemblance between the ancient *Pharisees* and the *Jansenists*, whom thou hast so well describ'd. The latter, as well as the former, pique themselves on their great Austerity, and endeavour to distinguish themselves by extraordinary Actions; witness their late ludicrous Agitations, and pretended Convulsions. They have

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as much, if not a greater, Veneration for their *Austin*, as the others had for Traditions, or their Successors, the *Rabbins*, for the *Talmud*. They are Cheats, Hypocrites, Impostors, and excel in the Art of imposing upon the People, particularly the Women, by a fair Outside. They make a mighty Boast of their strict Morals, which does not, however, hinder them from introducing upon the Stage, in order to delude the People, their *E-pines*, *Hemorrhoides*, and holy *Paris's*. In one Word, I find them but too like the *Pharisees*.

The *Essenes*, who, among the ancient *Jews*, were, perhaps, the only true Observers of the Law, had very different Opinions from those of the other Sects. They laid themselves under a more strict and rigid, and more prudent Behaviour, than the rest of the *Jews*, without the least Tincture of Hypocrisy; so that they were People truly virtuous, whose Moderation and Modesty might have been set as Patterns before the greatest Philosophers. 'Tis true, they gave into some wild Opinions, such as *absolute Predestination*, making Man a Slave, by denying him free Will, and Liberty of acting. They likewise differ'd from the *Pharisees* about the grand Article of a future State, and the Resurrection of the Body; and though they believed the former, they deny'd the latter, and maintain'd, that the Souls, upon leaving the Bodies, enter'd into a State of Immortality, where they are eternally happy or miserable, according to their Actions, without ever being join'd again to their own or any new Bodies*.

Several *Nazarenes* maintain, to this very Day, this last Opinion of the *Essenes*, and think there is no Purgatory, contrary to the Sentiments of other *Nazarenes*. They assert, that the Soul getting clear

* History of the *Jews* and neighbouring People, by Prideaux, Tome IV. Page 79.

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the Body enters into a State of eternal Happiness or Misery. Many of them admit of an absolute Predestination; and all who are call'd *Reform'd* in *Europe* very much resemble the ancient *Essenes*.

There was also another Sect among the *Jews*, who were stiled the *Contemplatives*, or *Therapeutæ**. Such as embraced their Opinions said, that it was a Motion of the Divine Love which threw them into a sort of Enthusiasm, such as that of the *Bacchantes* and *Corybantes* in the Celebration of the Mysteries of the ancient *Pagans*. They remain'd under this Enthusiasm till they arriv'd at a kind of Contemplation, which was full of Extacy and Rapture, and then they look'd upon themselves as far above other Men. They often retired into Desarts, abandon'd their Relations and Friends, to give themselves wholly up to the Spirit, with which they thought they were possess'd. These *Therapeutæ* may be easily found among the *Nazarene* Mysticks of our own Days. The Monks, who leave the World and retire into Desarts, giving themselves entirely up to Contemplation, resemble them not a little; as also, the *Fanatists*, or the *Enlightned*, may be compared to them, since they believe, as the others, that a supernatural Spirit entirely possesses them, directs all their Actions, and guides them in whatever they undertake.

From all which thou seest, my dear *Monceca*, that 'tis not without Foundation I assert there is scarce a *Nazarene* Sect which has not some of the Leaven of those formerly among the *Jews*. Thus the Opinions of Men succeed each other. After being for a Time exploded, they come again into Vogue, and find new Partizans.

There was in *Judea*, some time before the Destruction of that Kingdom, a Sect of People call'd *Herodians*, stiled such from *Herod* the Great;

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and

* *Paulo de vita Contemplativa*, Page 688. Edit. Colon.

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and the Errors of this Sect (still subsisting in every Court) are, to think as the Prince does, and to believe that they may lawfully consent to every thing commanded by a superior Power. *Herod* put this Principle into Practice, as we may learn from *Josephus* (a celebrated Historian of our Nation, but not regarded by us as he deserved) who informs us that this Prince, to make his Court to *Augustus* and the Quality of *Rome*, had done many Things not only forbidden, but directly contrary to the Law *. He so far deviated from the right Road, as to build Temples, and to erect Statues for idolatrous Worship, excusing such abominable Crimes, from the Necessity he lay under of keeping in good Terms with the *Romans*. His Followers adopted his Maxims; and the Courtiers, who have no other God but the Favour of their Masters, were almost to a Man of this Sect, extremely despis'd by the better Sort of *Jews*, and abhorr'd even to this Day, notwithstanding the Distance of Time, by all those who, whatever Religion they may be of, prefer the Service of God to a vain and transitory Glory. Here follows what a *Nazarene* Author says of these *Herodians*: *I believe they were Half Jews, like Herod; Men who indeed made Profession of that Religion, but could, upon Occasion, accommodate themselves to the Pagan Idolatry, and do whatever it required of them. The Sadducees, who believed not in a future Life, gave, almost to a Man, into Herodianism; so that they could not be reckon'd different Sects* †.

One may boldly assert, that, among Courtiers, the Religion of the Prince generally is the Standard of their Faith, and, in process of Time, gains upon the People. In Effect, 'tis scarce to be imagin'd but that the Religion of the Sovereign must,

Joseph. Antiq. Lib. XV. Cap. xii.
Page 124.

† *Prideaux, Tome IV.*

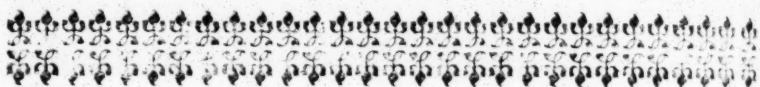
in Time, destroy and absorb the rest. Had *Henry IV.* continued Protestant, all *France*, of Course, would have been of that Religion; in which Case there would, perhaps, be as few Papists now at *Paris* as there are Protestants: For 'tis impossible that, in the Course of four or five Generations, there should not be, in every Family, some Representative or other desirous of Posts, Honours, and of a distinguish'd Rank, since it must be allow'd that Ambition has a proportionable Sway with Great and Small. To acquire a Fortune easily, 'tis necessary to be of the Prince's Religion. This is a strong Reason in its Favour, and an Argument that prevails with the Generality of Men.

To prove the Truth of this Fact, we have only to consider what has been the Fate of the Popish Religion all over the North, and we will soon be convinced that the Religion of the Prince must in Time extinguish all others. Had *Herod's* Successors thought as he did, the *Jewish* Religion would have soon been in a declining State, and the very *Pharisees* would have join'd that Sect, having too much Pride and Vanity not to have courted the Royal Favour. 'Tis not always the most zealous Sticklers for an Opinion that are the greatest Enemies to a Change. I have seen Abundance of *Nazarenes*, who have writ very warmly in Defence of a certain Opinion, whom Gold or Honours have afterwards corrupted, while illiterate Men have suffer'd the most cruel Tortures rather than to act contrary to their Principles. Were there a Design of introducing a new System of Religion in *France*, it would be no hard Task to gain the Doctors of the *Sorbonne*. By having the Disposal of Benefices, the Sovereign holds the Keys of Hearts; and were the *Jansenists* to obtain Preferments as they could desire, their Clamours would

cease: But as the *Molinists* enhance all for themselves, 'tis no Wonder the two Parties can never come to a good Understanding.

Farewel, my Friend, may Happiness attend thee.

Cairo, *****.



LETTER CXXVII.

JACOB BRITO to AARON MONCECA.

THE Superstition of the *Portuguese*, my dear *Monceca*, has often put me in mind of the extravagant Strictness with which our Forefathers observ'd the Sabbath. A Time has been in which they were so very superstitious, that, from a mistaken Delicacy of Conscience, they would not defend their Life upon that Day, chusing rather to die than to resist, if they happen'd to be attack'd. In the Beginning of the *Maccabean Wars*, the Folly and Madness were but too apparent from the Misfortunes that ensued, and therefore Men of Understanding and Judgment, who plainly saw that the Law could not authorize what was directly contrary to the Good of Society, decided, that the fourth Commandment did not forbid our Endeavours to defend Life, when attack'd or in Danger. By this Explication of the Commandment, they came nearer to the Intention of the Legislator, but did not, however, give it the necessary Extension, imagining that this Decision only allow'd

allow'd of Defence in the Case of an immediate Attack, but not to prevent Designs or preparative Steps tending to the Ruin of the Publick, or of private Persons, and still believed that they could not lawfully defend themselves, but at the last Extremity. Thus the *Jews*, when attack'd on the Sabbath-day, made a vigorous Defence, but did not imagine that, if they were besieged in a Town, it was lawful to hinder the raising of Batteries, or to make a Sally out upon the Enemy, because they would have, in that Case, been the Aggressors.

'Twas partly owing to this false Delicacy that *Pompey* carried the Temple, when he laid Siege to it. He soon perceived how the Case stood, and, instead of making the Attacks on the Sabbath-days, employed his Troops in erecting Works and Machines, raising Batteries, and filling up Ditches; in the Execution of all which he met with no manner of Opposition. The Soldiers did their Work so commodiously, that at length they sapp'd a great Tower, which, by its Fall, drew after it a considerable Part of the Wall, and made a Breach large enough for an Assault. Thus the Temple was taken and sack'd, through the blind Superstition of our Ancestors.

Whatever our *Rabbins* may pretend, I shall never be brought to think, that God would have introduced a Law hurtful or prejudicial to Society. The Light of Nature teaches us, that the Deity intends the Happiness of Mankind, and that his Laws have no other Tendency: We ought therefore, to reject, in celebrating the Sabbath, whatever may render it hurtful; and since, in the Time of the *Maccabees*, the Necessity of Resistance, upon being attack'd, was allow'd, the Law ought to have been also extended to a Permission of preventing Snares laid against us.

The *Nazarenes*, in this respect, act more rationally than the *Jews*. They have their Sabbath as well as we, but don't think themselves oblig'd to observe it in a Manner that may be hurtful or prejudicial. They are far from imagining that the Service of God requires they should, by a blameable Indolence, suffer the Destruction of his Temple and Altars. And they further add, that, in certain Laws, *the Letter kills, but the Spirit vivifies*; and that the Laws of God are not to be explain'd in a Sense that may make them clash with the Publick Good, since Necessity may dispense with many Things.

It were to be wish'd that our Forefathers had thought as reasonably about the Sabbath-day as our Brethren in this Country. They are not circumcis'd, they eat Pork, frequent the *Nazarene* Temples, sing Vespers, and even say Mass, upon Occasion, and when necessary, yet remain, nevertheless, good *Jews* in their Hearts. What else could they expect from an overstrain'd Zeal, but the total Destruction of the poor Remains of our unhappy Nation? I cannot approve of a proud and haughty Behaviour on some Occasions, and think it more allowable to be negligent, nay, even to fail in our Duty with regard to one Precept than to put ourselves to the Hazard of not fulfilling any of them all.

It is not because I don't admire the Constancy of our Ancestors, on the contrary I'm struck with it; but then I can't approve of it. What Mortal can see to what Length they have carried their Resolution without being astonish'd? *Josephus*, and other Historians, have transmitted it down to Posterity, and even the *Nazarene* Writers have done them Justice. See how an *English* Author speaks of the Destruction of the Temple, when *Pompey* carried it by Assault. *During all the Confusion,*
says

says he, *amidst the Cries and Disorders of that terrible Slaughter, the Priests were busied, in the Temple, upon the Duties of their Function, and went on in the Service with great Sedateness and Calmness of Mind, notwithstanding the Rage of their Enemies, shedding the Blood of their Relations and Friends before their Eyes, chusing rather to fall by the Swords of their Enemies, now Masters of all, than to abandon the Service of their God. Many of them saw their Blood mingled with that of the Sacrifices which they offered, and consequently became themselves Victims to their Duty; so that even Pompey himself could not but admire such Firmness and Constancy, of which scarce any Parallel is to be found* *.

Whatever Contempt other Nations may have for ours, I believe I may truly say, that no People have given more distinguish'd Marks of Bravery against Enemies, or shewn greater Veneration for the Deity, than we have done. 'Tis true we have sometimes fail'd; But who are faultless? For a Nation not to be guilty of Mistakes, we must suppose it made up of Men, who are not liable to human Frailties. What Nation would have resisted the Persecutions we have met with, without sinking under their Weight? and yet nothing has been able to shake us. We have bore, with a Patience worthy of Admiration, Racks and Tortures, or what the Invention of Man could contrive more exquisitely tormenting to inflict upon us. Vagabonds throughout the Earth, proscrib'd in several Parts of the World, and forced by others, who allow us to come among them, to pay for the very Air we breathe: Evils capable of wearing out the Patience of the greatest Stoick; and yet, under such a Load of Misfortunes, scarce an Instance can be brought of one, in an Age, who abandons his Religion and betrays his God.

The

* *Prideaux's Connections.*

The *Nazarenes*, constantly disposed to condemn our most laudable Actions, give the Name of Obstinacy to our Constancy, instead of doing Justice to our Firmness; and their Hatred towards us blinds them so far as to convert our very Virtues into Crimes. I would fain know the Reason why Grandeur of Soul and Fidelity to Heaven in them, becomes Obstinacy and Hardness of Heart in us? Since we are as firmly persuaded of the Truth of our Religion as they, can there be more Obstinacy on our Part than on theirs? A Man cannot be branded with such a Defect, but when he defends an Opinion, after he is convinced of its Falseness: But to change one's Sentiments in religious Matters out of pure Complaisance, is beneath a Man of Honour and Honesty; and whoever does it, may be compared to certain Idolaters in the *Indies*, who make a shameful Trade of their Religion with the *Nazarene* Missionaries. They abandon their Idols while they are paid, but, if that ceases, away they drive to their Woods and false Gods.

Consider, my Friend, the several *Nazarene* Sects that have sprung up in the Space of seventeen hundred Years, and you'll find that they have all insensibly dropp'd. One Age hath seen a Religion rise and fall, which in its Height had many Partizans. In this Rise and Fall of Religions, ours has suffer'd no Diminution; and I'm pretty well assured, that there are as many *Jews* now scatter'd up and down the World, as there were a little after the Destruction of *Jerusalem* by the *Romans*; and it would seem, that Heaven had taken care to multiply them in proportion to their Misfortunes. If all the *Jews* that are in the Countries of the *Mogul*, *Moscow*, *Turky*, *Africa*, and in the several Countries of *Europe*, were assembled in one Country, I doubt whether there would be a more numerous

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or powerful Nation on Earth. This, my Friend, will one Day happen, and the long Period of our Captivity will be at an End. The Walls of *Jerusalem* shall be rebuilt by her Children, the holy Temple again restored, and the Almighty worshipp'd therein by his faithful *Israelites*, in the same Manner as heretofore. Let the *Nazarenes* boast of their Advantages, and upbraid us with our Misfortunes: He, who subjected us to the Yoke of Nations, can deliver us when he pleases; and when our Crimes are expiated, then the *Nazarenes* shall be punish'd for theirs in their Turn.

We may apply to our Enemies, what an *English* Governor said to a *French* General, when *England* lost *Calais*, the last of its numerous Conquests in *France*: The General ask'd the Governor, by way of Jest, *When do you think you shall come over the Water again, and settle here?* That shall be (reply'd the Governor, with a serious Air) when your Sins are greater than ours. If this Governor was right in this Conjecture, the *French*, towards the latter End of the Reign of *Lewis XIV.* were become greater Sinners than the *English*. 'Tis true, Heaven pardon'd them, and their Enemies soon pass'd the Sea again. It shall be, my dear *Monceca*, with the *Jews* as with the *Nazarenes*; whenever they become virtuous, God will put an End to their Sufferings. All the different Captivities, that we have endured, have been the Punishment of our Crimes; and as they did not work effectually upon our Hearts, God hath thought fit to continue, through several Ages, our Afflictions, that he may at last entirely change our Inclinations, and render us worthy of him. The longer and harder our Slavery has been, the more agreeable will be its End. In vain have the Nations conspir'd the Ruin of *Israel*: All their Projects will be disappointed. As Smoke is driven by the Wind, so will the Almighty

ty dissipate their dark Contrivances. When our Deliverer shall come to break our Chains, the Earth will tremble at his Aspect, and Kings shall prostrate themselves at his Feet. He shall surmount all Obstacles, and *Sion* shall become more flourishing than ever. How happy shall the *Jews* be, who then enjoy the Light of the Sun! In one Day they shall see more Miracles wrought, than have been done since the Creation of the World. They shall contemplate the Face of the all-glorious *Messiah*, and perhaps that Day is nearer than we imagine. The Deliverer of *Israel* may appear in an Instant, but it is also possible that this happy Moment may be very far off. God alone knows when it will happen.

Let us therefore respectfully submit to his Decrees, adore his holy Providence, and rest assured, that if he punishes us, it is for our Good, and to bring us at last to his Glory.

*Lisbon, *****.*



LETTER CXXVIII.

AARON MONCECA to JACOB BRITO.

I Have oft consider'd what might be the Cause why some Nations were more affable than others; and, after all, I believe it is wholly owing to the Manner of educating Children in their tender Years, so as to inspire them with that Politeness so necessary to the Good of Society.

Some

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Some unthinking Authors * have pretended, that the People who lived under arbitrary Government were the most polish'd, taking it for granted, that Brutality is a necessary Consequence of Liberty. They compare the Politeness of the *French* to the Roughness of the *English*, and the plain, simple Manner of the *Dutch* and *Swiss*; but the Examples, which these Authors have adduced to support their Opinions, are destroy'd by others, that plainly prove Liberty to be no ways inconsistent with Affability. The *Greeks* and *Romans*, when their Republics flourish'd, were the most polite and civiliz'd People in the World, while the *Persians* and *Parthians*, Slaves to their Sovereigns, were look'd upon as Barbarians.

If we compare the Affability of the *Venetians* with the Roughness of the *Turks*, it must be allow'd, that Despotick Power is far from inspiring Politeness. We must therefore endeavour to find out the Cause of this elsewhere than in Submission or Liberty, since we find, in free Countries, People who are not very courteous, and under Despotick Government, People still less; and, when we consider that the *Muscovites* were heretofore the most brutal and unpolish'd People, and at the same time the greatest Slaves, we must allow that this Idea of Liberty, by which the Mind acquires a certain Arrogance bordering upon Brutality, is no sufficient Reason for the Want of Affability and Complaisance.

I therefore conclude, and I think with Justice, that Education is, as it were, the Spring that directs the Actions of Men, who are more or less tractable, as they have been more or less cultivated in their Youth. When they have been taught early to render themselves sociable, to bend their Tempers, and to accommodate their Wills to those of others,

Custom

* See, among others, *Lettres sur les Hollandais*.

Custom insensibly gains upon them, and they become complaisant without Design; so that Habit is to them a second Nature: But when, on the contrary, they have been brought up in a full Gratification of all their Passions, and allow'd to follow blindly whatever came into their Heads, their brutish Temper fortifies itself daily, and their bad Humour grows as they advance in Years; so that the Idea of Liberty, or of absolute Government, has no Share in the Cause of their Impoliteness.

The *Muscovites* are not become more submissive within these twenty Years, yet *Peter Alexowitz* has found the Secret of polishing their Manners, and changing their Customs, without making them Slaves; by obliging them to give their Children a suitable Education, he has made them more sociable. There's as much Difference between the present Court of *Muscovy* and what it was thirty Years ago, as there is betwixt that of *France* and *Constantinople*; and yet these Courts, with respect to Politeness, may be reckon'd as Antipodes to each other.

The *Muscovites*, formerly not so polite nor affable as the *Turks*, were even ignorant of the Rules of common Civility, and knew but very little of the Rights of Nations. The Character of Ambassador was not a Title sacred enough among them to preserve him from being insulted. *Wicquefort*, in his Treatise of the Ambassador and his Functions, speaks of them in these Terms.

The Muscovites are ill-manner'd, barbarous and brutal; and though Birth makes some Distinction between the better and the meanest Sort of them, yet they are all Slaves to the Czar; and nothing but what is low, stupid and clownish, appears in their Behaviour, which is the Consequence of a mean and servile Education. The Czar, or Grand Duke, entertains all Ambassadors at his own Expence, from their

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their Entry into his Dominions, and continues to do so as long as they remain in them: But this Treatment and Honour which he does them is accompany'd with an Arrogance which may be call'd beastly; whereas, in other Courts, the Masters of Ceremonies, or Introductors of Embassadors, shew all imaginable Civilities to the Embassadors, and do the Honours of the House in their Master's Name. The Muscovite Pristave affects to take the Place of Honour, makes it a Punctilio not to alight from his Horse till the Embassador is dismounted, throws himself first into a Coach or Sledge to take the most honourable Place, and, in short, behaves with the utmost Haughtiness upon all Occasions. There are several very odd Relations given of that Court, particularly in the Embassy sent by the Duke of Holstein Gottorp thither, and into Persia, in 1633, and following Years; but there's none exposes their Impertinence more than the Account given by the Earl of Carlisle, who went thither in the same Year on the Part of the King of Great Britain: The Pristave, who received him at Archangel, took the Hand of the Embassador, and would not yield up that Point till the Governor order'd him to comply with the Earl's Desire, who was fully resolved to maintain the Dignity of the King his Master. The Day was fix'd on which he was to make his publick Entry into Moscow. He was on Horseback; and, when he had rode about Half a League, was told, that it must be put off till next Day, so that he was obliged to take up his Lodgings in a pitiful Village. The Embassador was highly provok'd, and wrote a Letter of Complaint to the Czar, in pretty strong Terms, but he received no Satisfaction on this Account, or on the Business which had brought him there; and, on a certain Occasion, in which they ought to have done him the greatest Honours, they affected to insult him in the most outrageous Manner. The Czar invited him to Dinner,

but the Table where he sat was at a greater Distance than another where the Bojars, that's to say his Slaves, were seated, and had even the Distinction of the right Hand; so that he was so little satisfied with this Court, that, at his Audience of Conge, he refused the Presents, and express'd his Resentment in such Terms, that the Czar sent a Minister to the British Court to complain of his Conduct.*

Though this Passage is somewhat long, I hope thou'lt bear with it, since it proves very clearly, that the most submissive People may be often extremely brutal, and gives a just Idea of the Manners and Customs of the *Muscovites*. It must be however allow'd, that, within these few Years, there's a Change amongst them; but still there's Occasion for reforming many Things in which they fail. Time, probably, will complete what *Peter Alexowitz* has begun; and 'tis only from it that a total Change of a People so savage and brutal can be expected.

I have heard the Chevalier *Maisin* say, when I was at *Paris*, that he had met with several young *Muscovites* at *Toulon*, whom the *Czar* had sent into *France* to learn Navigation and Ship-building, and that they enlisted themselves as Marines. In the Beginning, they were seldom a Day without quarrelling, and drawing their Knives upon one another, who should have the first Cut of the Meat; so that they were as unpolish'd as the Bears of their Country; but, by Degrees, they became more polite, and were as well bred, when they return'd to their own Country, as if they had been born in the Heart of *France* or *Germany*.

The Strangers, who have gone over into *Muscovy*, have done great Service to that Country. Besides the Arts which they have propagated, they have made the People sensible of their Brutality and

* *Wiquefort's* Ambassador, Lib. I. Sect. xviii. Page 476.

and Clownishness; so that I look upon the *German*s and *French* there as Missionaries employ'd in preaching Humanity to that unpolish'd Nation; and I believe them much more useful to the Good of Society, than those who go to notify the Pope's Power in the *Indies*. The first Duty of Men, next to that of worshipping the Diety, ought to regard the Necessities of their fellow Creatures; and a Man must be void of Charity, not to rejoice when he sees a whole Nation reclaim'd from their Follies. Though a *Jew*, I take part in the Happiness of all Mankind; and when I hear of any Person that lays himself out to do them Good, I look upon him as an Hero. The World being the Philosopher's Country, he ought to be divested of that narrow, mean Temper, but too predominant among Persons of different Nations. I could heartily wish that all Mankind were endow'd with *Swiss* Frankness, the good Sense of the *Dutch*, *French* Wit, and *English* Penetration; though they were not *Jews*, yet they would be truly worthy of the Character, and I should acknowledge them as Brethren. These are my Sentiments, my dear *Brito*, with regard to Mankind in general: I don't know how thou wilt approve of them; but I believe thee so much exempt from Prejudice, as to esteem Virtue wherever it appears.

I shall depart for *England* the first Opportunity. I have already wrote to *Jeremy Costa*, to procure me a Lodging in a quiet Part of the Town. In the Course of my Travels, I've always endeavour'd to lodge in such Places, where I might indulge, at Pleasure, Meditation, without Interruption. In all great Cities, particularly *Paris* and *London*, a Man, who applies himself to Study, ought to be as careful in the Choice of his Lodging, as a Man, about to marry, in that of a Wife; for in both Cases equally his Tranquillity depends

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on his Choice. 'Tis true, that, in *France* and *England*, a Man may more easily quit his Lodging than his Wife: But, after all, when a Man is once fix'd, Removing is very troublesome.

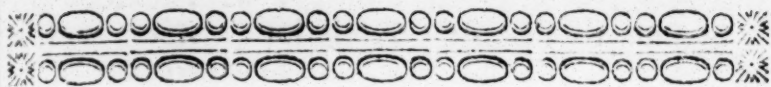
I must confess to thee, my dear *Brito*, that I'm no Friend to Novelty, I have always observ'd a perfect Uniformity in my Conduct, and my Manner of Life is the Reverse of those who pass their Days in a constant Hurry. I have often, at *Paris*, pitied a Number of *French*, who appear'd, in my Opinion, as uneasy as if they had been in a Place besieg'd.

The Desire of Change and Innovation, is a sort of Infatuation; and to cure a Brain thus turn'd, more Philosophical Reasonings are necessary, than Drops of Holy Water to a *Nazarene* Priest, who would cast *Asttaroth* or *Belial* out of a Body of which they had got Possession. Yet it frequently happens, that Philosophical Arguments are as ineffectual in the one Case, as Ecclesiastical Ceremonies in the other; so that both Maladies remain incurable. This is a common Case at *Paris*, where half the Debauchees are as firmly fix'd in their Follies, as the *Convulsionaries* are in their Diseases. Thou wilt be astonish'd, my dear *Brito*, that I look upon these last as *Demoniacks*; but, to speak sincerely, I can't tell what else to call them. What Name can one give to those who act every Absurdity with an Air of Mystery? Thou'lt perhaps say, that I call those *Demoniacks*, who deserve the Treatment of Cheats and Impostors. It may be so: I leave it to thee to decide the Controversy.

May'lt thou enjoy thy Health, my dear *Brito*, and live content and happy.

Hamburgh, *****.

LETTER



LETTER CXXIX.

AARON MONCECA to ISAAC ONIS.

THERE are frequent Disputes about the Preference which ought to be given to the Memory of Sovereigns, who have distinguish'd themselves by their Virtue and Courage; and it is not yet agreed who shall have the Preheminence. For my part, I know none more worthy of it, than *Henry IV.* King of *France*. All other Princes, so much boasted of, if they had many good Qualities, have also had many bad ones; and there's not one among them, who has not sullied the Lustre of his Virtues, not only by a small Fault, but by some enormous Crime, incompatible with Humanity, and unworthy the Character of a brave Soul. Thou may'st not, perhaps, have thoroughly reflected on this Subject; I will therefore give thee some evident Proofs, in Support of my Opinion, by running over all the ancient and modern Heroes.

If we go as high as the fabulous Times of the *Trojan Wars*, and the Heroes of *Homer*, we shall find them a Pack of proud, hair-brain'd, designing, perjur'd Villains.

Achilles was inconsiderate and rash, who suffer'd half the *Greeks* to be cut off to no Purpose; a Brute, that insulted the Corpse of *Hector*, whose Valour he ought highly to have esteem'd. None but mean and sordid Minds are capable of insult-

ing an Enemy, when vanquish'd. *Agamemnon* was the Cut-Throat of his Family; he sacrificed his Daughter to his own Ambition. *Ajax* was a Madman, *Ulysses* a Cheat, and *Idomenius* the Murderer of his Son. In short, one may truly assert, that the best Heroes of Antiquity were scarce Men of Probity.

But, without dwelling upon those Times of Fiction, my dear *Isaac*, let us examine the Conduct of the greatest Monarchs in the Universe. What Crimes did not *Alexander* the Great commit in the last Years of his Life? What Vices was he not guilty of? With his own Hands he butcher'd his Friends, and caus'd his best Captains to be put to Death: He abandon'd himself to Drinking and Debauchery; and many a Man has been broke upon the Wheel for a Murder less horrid than that of *Clitus*. I do not know whether *Marius* and *Sylla* ought to be enroll'd in the Kalendar of Sovereigns; but it is notorious, that while they were at the Head of the *Roman* Republick, they committed more Villanies, Robberies and Murders, than ever were perpetrated by the *Miqueletes* of *Catalonia*, or the Fanaticks in *Viviers* *.

Pompey and *Cæsar* were two illustrious Highwaymen, who disputed, a long time, which should ruin their Country. Both abused that Power injudiciously granted them by their Fellow Citizens; and whatever pompous Titles their Partizans might give them, they can't be consider'd, but as Pests of Government, and Enemies to their Country. The one design'd to enslave it, under Pretence of defending it; and the other had the same ill Design, under that of revenging the Injuries done him.

Anthony, *Augustus* and *Lepidus*, the Successors of *Cæsar*, colour'd the Earth and Sea by their bloody Proscriptions. I look upon them as three
Thieves

* A Town in France.

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Thieves on the High Road, who, after the Death of their Captain, share his Booty. 'Tis true, that *Augustus*, in the latter Part of his Life, distinguish'd himself by his Goodness and Clemency; but had he been a private Person, he could not have escaped the Gallows long before his Penitence appear'd. The *Nazarenes* have a Proverb, *When the Devil grew old, he turn'd Hermit*, which is very applicable to him.

Let us leave those Heroes of Antiquity, and come to those of later Times; among whom we shall find Men of superior Merit, tho' their Virtues were not without considerable Blemishes.

Francis I. King of *France*, had a thousand good Qualities. He was good, generous and sincere; but, with all these Excellencies, he falsified his Word to *Charles V.* after he was deliver'd from his Captivity in *Spain*: However, it was but paying that Emperor in the Coin he had more than once receiv'd of him. Notwithstanding all the Virtues of this great Emperor, his Word was not to be depended on; and his greatest Admirers can't deny his Insincerity.

Times within our Memory have produced four Heroes of different Merit, all endow'd with exalted Virtues, which each of 'em sullied by some remarkable Defects.

The first of these Heroes is *William III.* King of *Great Britain*, who doubtless was possess'd of very shining Qualities; which would have appeared brighter to Posterity, and been more esteemed by the judicious Part of Mankind, if he had never contributed to the dethroning his Father-in-Law. What would the World say of a Man who robs his Father, and obliges him to beg his Bread thro' Misery and Want?

Lewis XIV. is the second of these Heroes. He was good-natur'd, magnificent, hated Cruelty, loved

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loved learned Men, and encouraged the Arts and Sciences, so as to make them flourish in his Dominions. His Enemies have frequently accused his exorbitant Ambition, though, in this Respect, one may easily excuse him. His Reasons were just in punishing the *Spaniards*, who, for a long Time, had endeavour'd the Destruction of *France*. If he aggrandized his Kingdom, by extending his Glory, he also augmented the Good of his People; therefore his Ambition and Conquests may be justified. In fine, he had equalled *Henry IV.* if he had never been advised by the *Jesuites*, or seen *Madam Montespan*. To deprive a Husband of his Wife, and to be so far govern'd by Monks, as to banish his Kingdom those, by whom the House of *Bourbon* had been infinitely obliged, render'd it necessary for *Lewis XIV.* to be possessed of eminent Qualities to prevent his Fame from being entirely ruin'd, by these two remarkable Slips in his Conduct.

I am sensible, my dear *Isaac*, that the Politicians excuse the Banishment of the Reformers, by the Necessity there was of having but one Religion in *France*, in order to establish its Tranquillity. These Reasons have indeed a great deal of Weight; but, however, in exiling the Protestants, there was no Necessity of distinguishing their Departure by more Murders and Proscriptions than happened under the famous Triumvirate.

It is alledged, that *Lewis XIV.* knew nothing of all these Cruelties, otherwise, being naturally of a human Disposition, he would never have permitted them. Notwithstanding this, he was still responsible, since he was so weak as to abandon himself to the pernicious Counsels of Monks and Devotees.

The Character of the late *Czar, Peter I.* is a Composition of Bravery and Cruelty, blended with

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with Virtues and Vices. Whatever may be publish'd to his Glory, I shall never agree that Brutality is a Virtue, or that a Father ought to reckon, amongst his illustrious Actions, the Death of his Son.

Charles XII. of *Sweden* had a surprising Courage, with several other eminent Qualities; but he push'd his Revenge too far; and, perhaps, 'tis not unlikely that the Chain of Evils, which followed the Battle of *Pultowa*, were a Judgment upon him for his Cruelty towards the unfortunate *Pathul*, which was aggravated by the Dignity and Character with which that Hero was invested.

All these Heroes, whom I have recited, either eraz'd, or, at least, eclipsed their Virtues, by capital Errors.

Henry IV. had no Failings, but such as are incident to human Nature. He conquer'd his Enemies; and, when they submitted, he generously forgave them. He subdued his own Kingdom, and made War only to recover what justly belonged to him, or to repel the Enemy who came to attack him, and foment Troubles and Divisions among his Subjects. He was the Father of his People, a Protector of the Widow and Fatherless. He loved Women, but not to such a Degree as *Lewis XIV.* In short, he had such a Fund of Virtue, that, if I had lived in the Times of Idolatry, when illustrious Princes were deify'd, an extraordinary Measure of Divine Grace had been necessary to restrain me from going into the Temple of *Henry IV.* and burning Incense on his Altar.

France is at this Day govern'd by a Prince, who may, perhaps, one Day rival the greatest King of his Race. He is endowed with Affability, Generosity, Clemency and Discretion; such good Qualities

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lities are a certain Indication, that other Virtues will exert themselves, when Occasion requires.

It is customary with the *Nazarenes*, to offer up publick Prayers in their Churches for the Safety of their Sovereign, and to implore the Divine Being for his Health and Prosperity. Who could imagine, after this, that the best King in the World should be assassinated in the Midst of his People, to whom he was a common Parent? A strange and fatal Instance of the Folly and Madnes of Mankind! *Lewis XI.* met with few Rebels amongst his Subjects. *Henry IV.* found amongst his the cruelest of Enemies.

The best of Kings have frequently had the worst Subjects. It seems that Severity is the principal Method to produce Awe and Reverence in the Populace; mean and servile Creatures, who can only be govern'd by a rigid and inflexible Administration. The Indulgence and Clemency of the present King of *France* has increased the Haughtiness of the *Molinists*, and the Malignity of the *Jansenists*. The Hope of Impunity emboldens them to commit the most outrageous Insults.

Sometime ago, a Prelate, call'd *Lafiteau* *, who had been a *Jesuit* for several Years before his Promotion, composed a Book, intituled, an *Answer to the Anecdotes on the Constitution Unigenitus*. In refuting the Sentiments of the *Jansenists*, he has treated with Scurrility Men of venerable Characters, and even the Rights and Properties of the Kingdom are not exempt from his Railery. The King was content with only suppressing the Books, and made a Decree forbidding the Sale, and ordering those who had the Copies to bring them in to Persons appointed for that Purpose.

Thou believest, without doubt, dear *Isaac*, that the Prelate, affected with the Mildness and Generosity

* Bishop of *Sisteron*.

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rosity of his Prince, became more discreet for the future. Not at all; for some Months after the Prohibition of his Work, he publish'd a Sequel of the same pernicious Tendency, which was likewise condemned by a second Decree. It is not improbable that this Prelate may be actually at work, and will publish quickly another Volume, by way of *Continuation* to the *Anecdotes*.

Truly, my dear *Isaac*, there are many Subjects who greatly abuse the Benignity and Goodness of their Princes. I know none more audacious than certain Ecclesiasticks, who frequently attempt the most presumptuous Things; and imagine, they ought to be indulg'd therein through Reverence to their Character. They execute, with Impunity, what is shocking for other Men only to think of: And I may safely say, that, in all Religions, the greatest Happiness which can attend the Community is, to have Priests adorned with Meekness and Wisdom. Ecclesiasticks are in States what Emetics are in Medicine; nothing more useful, when well applied, nothing more dangerous, when unskilfully administred. An upright Prelate, an honest Parson, a prudent Minister, a virtuous Rabbi, are invaluable Blessings: But what a Train of Evils do they bring, when they are of an opposite Character?

May'st thou, dear *Isaac*, enjoy thy Health, and live content, happy and satisfy'd.

Hamburg, *****.



LETTER



L E T T E R CXXX.

ISAAC ONIS to AARON MONCECA.

IT is sometime, my dear *Monceca*, since I gave thee an Account of the Customs and Manners of the ancient *Egyptians*. I shall now communicate to thee what I have observ'd most curious in their Tombs. I have visited many, and, in most of them, have met with very agreeable Entertainment.

Along the Banks of the *Nile* there lies a sandy Plain, which one may call the general Burying-Place of this Nation. It is full of Sepulchres, many of which have been open'd. In most of these are to be seen Mummies in their Coffins, which are still entire. Near these Coffins are frequently found Images of those Gods, for whom the Person, while living, had a peculiar Veneration. It is from hence the *Turks* have borrow'd their Custom, of having certain Sentences out of their *Alcoran* interr'd with 'em. To the same Original we may refer the Superstition of some *Nazarenes*, who have the Image of their Tutelar Saints buried with them. Thus, thou seest, this vain and stupid Notion can plead Antiquity on its Side. After this Manner, Superstition is perpetuated; and one Religion adopts the Chimeras and Absurdities of another.

The Custom, in Use among some *Nazarenes*, of placing Images, or hanging up *Votive Tables*,
in

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in their Churches, is, in like Manner, deriv'd from the *Egyptians* and *Greeks*. When they had either suffer'd Shipwreck, or narrowly escap'd some great Danger, they got the History drawn in some small Piece, which they carried about and shew'd, to excite the Compassion and Charity of the People. At last they dedicate it in the Temple of that God, to whom they imagine themselves indebted for their Preservation.

The same Superstition that took its Rise two thousand five hundred Years ago, is practis'd at this Day. The Saints, Male and Female, have taken the Place of the Gods and Goddesses. St George succeeds in Room of *Mars*; St Anthony, in that of *Pan*: St Lucia stands for *Diana*, and St Cecilia for *Minerva*. There is no Corporation, no Body of Tradesmen, without its Patron. The Shoe-makers have St *Crispin*; the Taylors, St *Placidus*; and even the Rope-dancers have their St *Pantaleon*. 'Tis true, these last were never regularly incorporated; and yet the Danger they are in of breaking Legs and Arms, hath obliged them to look out for a Patron, to take Charge of the whole Fraternity. When I was at *Vienna*, I have often been in the Churches of the *Nazarenes*, where the Walls were almost cover'd with Heads, Hands, Thighs, Arms, Feet, &c. all made of Wax, and consecrated to the Saint of that particular Church, in Acknowledgment of Miracles supposed to have been wrought by him. This presents the most agreeable, and, withal, the most whimsical, Scene in the World.

A *Nazarene*, who had not much Faith in Legs of Wax, told me a merry Story, when I was in *Germany*. The Story was this: One *Michon*, having had the good Luck to marry his Mistress, exerted himself to her Satisfaction, during the *Honey Moon*. His Constitution was naturally good,

and his Fondness for his Bride seem'd to add to his Vigour; so that Madam *Michon* thought herself exceeding happy in her Choice. However, this could not hinder an unlucky Accident suddenly to interrupt the Felicity of this happy Lady. Mr *Michon*, though he lov'd his Wife very well, thought it incompatible with the Character of a *Smart*, to be confin'd: so his Conscience allow'd him to go astray now and then. One Evening having supp'd with his Friends, the Wine putting odd Notions into his Head, immediately he repairs to a certain Temple of *Venus*, where he offer'd according to the Custom of the Place. In Return, he receiv'd from the Goddess such a Present as she often makes to her Votaries. Happy it was for *Michon*, that he perceiv'd it in Time; but how to satisfy his Wife, was the Question. He imposed upon her a Course of Abstinence, no less severe than unusual. She bore, for some time, her Misfortune with as much Temper as the Case would allow; but at last, losing all Patience, she ventures to ask her Husband the Reason of his Behaviour. *I can't perceive*, (said she) *Mr Michon, whence your Indifference proceeds; but I am very sensible we have liv'd together, for some time past, in a Manner very unsuitable to our present State.* This Discourse embarrass'd the Husband not a little: He would not, for a World, confess the Matter of Fact; and yet, finding it necessary to say something, he first fetch'd a deep Sigh, and then proceeded thus. *Alas! Madam, I am the unhappiest Man upon Earth!* The poor Woman, alarm'd at this tragical Exclamation, urg'd him to explain himself. *And have you any Secrets* (says she) *that I must not know? How will you reconcile this with your repeated Oaths of eternal Affection to your Wife?* *I am going* (continued he) *to inform you of an Adventure that has almost driven me*

to Despair. I went, some Days ago, with a few Friends, to a Country Place not far from Town. In the Way, I attempted to jump over a Ditch; and my Foot unhappily slipping,——I can scarce tell you the rest,——I made such an Effort to recover myself, that I quite strain'd, alas! not my Leg, or Ankle, but a Member of far greater Consequence.——God forbid! (cry'd Madam Michon) Is it possible? Yes, my Dear, (reply'd he, in a faint Voice) there is nothing more certain: But, bad as it is, the Malady may be cured. The Surgeon, under whose Care I am, assures me, that within six Weeks I shall be well. O! (says Madam) you have quite reviv'd my Spirits. I was miserably afraid your Illness would have been far more obstinate and dangerous. We must, however, neglect nothing that may in the least contribute to your Recovery; therefore, I'll immediately go and offer a Vow to St Pantaleon. It is to him we apply in Case of a broken Bone, or strain'd Sinew; and I doubt not but, by his Assistance, you'll soon get rid of your Misfortune. The good Lady was not slow to execute her Design. She made the Figure of the Part affected in Wax, and then away she hastens to the Church of the Cordeliers, to have it exposed in some honourable Place. This Offering was presented by a Boy, in a Bason covered with Linen. The Monk who performed the Ceremony, having remov'd the Cloth, was much surpris'd at the Sight; and, turning away his Eyes, with an Air of Disdain, *Take away that*, says he to the Boy. Dear Father, (reply'd the Child, in a soft Tone) *it is the Vow of Madam Michon.* Carry it away, I say, (answer'd the Monk, hastily) *and tell her, we have incomparably better in the Convent.* Thus Madam Michon's Vow lost its Place; but all this did not hinder her Husband from recovering shortly after.

The *Nazarenes* are the first to laugh at their own Superstitions, but they continue Slaves to them for all that. This, dear *Monceca*, is a certain Proof that they have no solid Judgment. I'm at a Loss to comprehend how Men commonly act directly opposite to Conscience. Is it not a Wonder to see the ridiculous Behaviour of some, who, notwithstanding, talk very rationally. To hear them speak, one is apt to imagine that they were made to be Teachers of Mankind; but observe their Conduct, instead of the Man of Sense, we discover the Bigot, the Furioso, and the Debauchee.

But, to return to the Tombs of the ancient *Egyptians*, thou knowest, dear *Monceca*, that the famous Pyramids were the Monuments of their Kings. The Grandees of the Kingdom followed their Example, and erected for themselves these known by the Name of the lesser Pyramids, and which are situated on the Banks of the River. As for private Persons, they lie buried in the Catacoms, which are very numerous in the sandy Plain nigh the Southern Pyramids. When any one was interred in these Tombs, they always covered the Stone, that closed up the Entrance, with four or five Foot deep of Sand. This contributed not a little to preserve the Body, by securing them from the Injury of the external Air. Besides this Precaution, there was never an *Egyptian* but was embalm'd after his Decease, in a Manner more or less costly, according to the Ability of his Heirs.

Superstition was also at the Bottom of all this Care about Funerals. The Priests assur'd the People, that, in a certain Period of Years, there would be an universal Restoration, at which Time the Bodies that could be preserved, would be animated by their own Spirits again. Every one therefore, from a Self-love natural to Mankind, being desirous

rous to possess his old Lodging at this grand Revolution, gave strict Charge to his Heirs to take all imaginable Care of his Body. What astonishes me is, that the Hump-back'd, the Lamé, the Blind, and other maim'd Wretches, had as strong an Inclination as the rest, to resume their deform'd and ugly Bodies: They could have no other Reason, but because they believed, that when the Body was once lost there was no getting another. However, one good End is answered by all this Pains, the Cabinets of the Curious are furnish'd with Rarities, and the Shops of Apothecaries with Drugs, out of these Repositories of the Dead.

Among the Bodies of great Men, preserved through many Ages, History mentions particularly that of *Alexander* the Great, which was actually entire in the Time of *Augustus*. They tell us further, that when *Augustus* was in *Egypt*, he had the Curiosity to visit the Tomb of that famous Emperor, and that he saw the Body in a Shrine of Glass, which was substituted in the Room of one of Gold, taken away by *Selencus Cybiosactes* *. So ridiculous 'tis for the most potent and dreaded Sovereign upon Earth, to dream of Respect to be paid him after he is dead. Nay, Death delivers Men from servile Attendance, and sets the Prince and his Subjects on a Level. The Tombs of the ancient *Egyptian* Kings, that of *Alexander*, and other Heroes of Antiquity, have been violated with as little Ceremony as those of private Men, their Memories and Monuments have been used with the same Freedom. We adore, in a Manner, living Princes; they are constantly attended with Crowds of Flatterers: But, as *Malherbe* observes,

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Ont-ils

* *Suetonius in octav. Cap. XVIII. Dion. Cass. Lib. I. Pag. 454. Strabo, Lib. XVIII. Page 794.*

*Ont-ils rendu l'Esprit, ce n'est plus que poussiere,
Que cette Majesté si pompeuse & si fiere,
Dont l'Etat orgueilleux étonnoit l'Univers;
Et dans ces grands Tombeaux où leurs Ames hantaines
Font encore les vaines,
Ils sont rougés des vers.*

*Là se perdent ces Noms, de Maitres de la Terre,
D'Arbitres de la Paix, de Foudre de la Guerre.
Comme ils n'ont plus de Sceptre, ils n'ont plus de
Flatteurs :*

*Et tombent avec eux d'une Chute commune
Tous ceux que leur Fortune
Faisoit leurs Serviteurs.*

Thus English'd :

*When breathless, they are Dust become,
And all the Glories of their Pride
Are sunk within the silent Tomb;
Though for its Splendour it be ey'd,
Yet they are low, and lost indeed,
And hungry Worms upon them feed.*

*There all their swelling Titles lose,
Givers of Peace, and Thunder-bolts of War;
And as no more they can their Bounty use,
There free from Flatterers they are.
Nature makes equal in their Graves,
Whom Fortune made or Lords or Slaves.*

See, my dear *Monceca*, what becomes of Monarchs, even the greatest and most formidable! It is impossible to express the sudden Fall of worldly Grandeur, better than *Malherbe* has done. The first Time I read the Works of that Poet, I was mightily

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mightily charm'd with these Lines. A *Frenchman*, who lives at *Pera*, made me a Present of this Author's Writings, which I keep with the greatest Care, and esteem little inferior to *Horace* himself.

Take care of thy Health, my dear *Monceca*: May Happiness and Satisfaction attend thee.

Cairo, *****.



LETTER CXXXI.

AARON MONCECA to ISAAC ONIS.

IN my last, I gave thee my Sentiments of those Princes who have made the greatest Figure in History, and to whose Memory the World pays little less than divine Honour; and, without Ceremony, I gave the Preference to *Henry IV.* of *France*. I have often, since that Time, reflected on what I had wrote, and must now tell thee, that the more I consider the Subject, the more am I confirmed in my Judgment. I have so great an Opinion of the Virtues of that Monarch, that I make no Question but Heaven intended the Civil Wars, and other Calamities of *France*, during the Minority of his Son *Lewis XIII.* as a Judgment, for not avenging that monstrous Parricide as it deserv'd. The Government was satisfied with punishing only the Assassin, and the Murder of so great a King was atton'd by the Execution of one single Villain; whereas Vengeance ought to have pursued all who were, in
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the least, accessory to the Crime. All, who, by their Behaviour or Words, had encouraged so detestable a Fact, should have been sent a packing to the other World along with *Raivillac*. The Proscriptions by which the *Trinuvirate* made *Rome* itself tremble, would have been justifiable on this mournful Occasion. Every Man, upon whom a just Suspicion could have been fixed, ought to have been made a Sacrifice on the Tomb of that generous Prince.

But it seem'd that Heaven reserv'd the Punishment of this Crime to itself, since human Justice can scarce inflict a Vengeance proportioned to the Guilt. So it is that Providence seldom permits Assassins to escape, even in this Life, especially if they have stain'd their Hands in the Blood of a Prince.

The Murder of *Cesar* is an evident Proof of what I assert. History informs us, that, of all the sixty Conspirators against him, not one died a natural Death. They all perish'd miserably, and made a tragical Exit. Even *Cassius*, who surviv'd the rest of his bloody Associates, at last met the same melancholy Fate *. The Happiness and Good of Society is the peculiar Care of the Deity; Justice therefore seems to demand, that he punish, even in this World, such Wretches as dare attack the sacred Persons of Princes.

It is worth while, my dear *Isaac*, to remark, on this Occasion, a Thing which is not more astonishing than true, viz. That almost all the *Nazarene* Monarchs, who have been assassinated, have been butcher'd either by the Hands of the Monks themselves, or by Persons who were their Tools. It was a *Dominican* who poisoned the Emperor *Henry VII.* and in the Execution of that execrable

Fact,

* *Plutarch in Cesare. Sueton. in Jul. Caf. Cap. LXXX. Etrapol. Lib. VI.*

Fact, profan'd the most sacred Rite in his Religion. Another Monk, of the same Order, plung'd his Dagger in the Breast of *Henry III.* of *France*. A *Jesuit* * suborned and persuaded a young Fanatick † to attempt the Murder of the best King ‡ in the World. But it is impossible to enumerate all the Plagues which this detested Race have brought upon Mankind. And yet Princes, to whom they have done most Mischief, and consequently who should hate them most, suffer them to be about their Persons, through an Excess of Weakness. We are told indeed, that *Lewis XIII.* whom I just now mentioned, no sooner saw a Monk but he fell a trembling, and did not care they should stay long in his Presence. The Remembrance of what they had done to several of his Predecessors, and to his Father in particular, may well account for this. Even at this Day, Monks are forbid to enter *Versailles*, or any other of the King's Palaces, without a special Permission. This I learn'd when I was at *Paris*; and I am positive as to the Fact.

In spite of all the Marks of Contempt, which are put upon the Monks on certain Occasions, I think we may justly apply to them what *Tacitus* says of Astrologers in *Rome*; they were continually procuring Edicts to banish them the City, but never had the Courage to put them in Execution §. But this Business concerns the *Nazarenes* only, and not us. If they will be govern'd by Monks, why should we pretend to hinder them? Let us leave them in their Infatuation, and proceed to some more entertaining Subject.

I purpose soon to embark for *England*, with two Men of very different Characters; the one is
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* John Guignard. † John Chatel. ‡ Henry IV. King of France.

§ Genus hominum potentibus insidum, sperantibus fallax. quod in civitate nostrâ, & vetabitur semper, & retinebitur. Tacit. Hist. Lib. I.

an extravagant Admirer of the *Italian* Musick, has travelled much for his Improvement in that Science, and is just now come from *Italy*, where he made a considerable Stay to become Master of what he professes. This Gentleman speaks of nothing but *Concerts, Symphonies, Virtuosi, Sonatas, Motattas, Cantatas, &c.* The other is a Metaphysician, eternally in the Clouds, and who is constantly busy in reconciling the Systems of *Descartes, Gassendi, Locke, and Malebranche.* This Man seems distracted in his Conversation; sometimes we can scarce get four Words out of him in a whole Day. He will frequently stamp, bite his Nails, and scratch his Head; and when the Question proves too intricate for him, one would conclude, from the Faces he makes, that he was seized with some convulsive Distemper.

It happens sometimes, that our Lover of Musick interrupts his profound Speculations, to have his Opinion on the Beauty of some new Air, *Sir*, says he, *do me the Favour to give me your Sentiments of this Song.* Immediately he falls a singing, and whilst he is chanting his *Italian* Air, the Metaphysician shrugs up his Shoulders, turns his Eyes to Heaven, and, from the Bottom of his Heart, gives both Song and Songster to the Devil. He was just going to leave the Company, when our Musician seized his Arm. *Ah, dear Sir*, says he, *don't stir; let me sing that Verse over again. Mark the Beauties of the Air!—Well, is it not incomparably fine!—That Vinci must be a great Man! I'll swear, I would rather have been the Author of his Artaxerxes, than the King of Corsica.—Confess the Truth, Sir, and own that your Philosophers are a pitiful insignificant Set of Mortals, when compared with the grand Masters of Musick.*

These last Words recovered the Metaphysician out of his waking Dream; he could no longer endure

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endure to hear those great Men run down, of whom he had the Honour to be a Disciple. *You fancy then*, said he, with an Air of Disdain, *That a deal of Respect is due to a Musician; and that there is a wonderful Penetration and Genius necessary, to sing Re, Mi, Fa, Sol.* I look upon all you have said, Sir, to be mere Banter. But, to be grave, Sir, can you tell me what Use Musick is of? *Why truly it is good for nothing in the World: Or, the most you can alledge in its Favour is, that it serves to please a few empty Girls and foppish Petit Maitres: But Philosophy is useful in the Conduct of Life; it teaches good Manners, and enables us to bridle our Passions. There is not a Secret in Nature which it does not unfold. In short, it makes a Man both happy and wise at one and the same Time.*

But tell me, Sir, replied our Musical Virtuoso, you are a Philosopher, or, at least, you study Philosophy; Are you therefore easy and happy? *Nay, sure you shall not persuade me out of my Senses. I see you in a constant Perplexity, you enjoy not so much as a Moment's Ease. You eat, nay, and speak sometimes, without thinking what you are doing. Your Head is so full of Whims, that you can hardly distinguish betwixt Day and Night. 'Tis no longer since, than the other Day, that your Wisdom was going to throw yourself into a Pond; and if I, useless as I am, had not catched hold of your Coat, your Philosophy had been in great Danger of being drown'd. Will you tell me, that a Science, which puts out a Man's Eyes, so that he can't see a large Reservoir, at the Foot of an Avenue, is absolutely necessary to make a Man wise? To be plain with you, I look upon you Philosophers to be a very fantastick sort of People; while you are gazing at the Stars, forsooth, you can't observe the Dangers that lie even among your Feet*. You express*
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* *Quod ante pedes nemo spectat; Caeli servantur plagas, Cicero de Divinat. Lib. II.*

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the utmost Contempt for Musick; but I challenge you, Sir, to prove that it ever did half the Mischief in the World, as that sort of Fanaticism which you call Philosophy. The Charms of Musick, I grant, ravish the Senses so, as only to sooth the Mind, and throw it into a kind of exstactick Repose; but never, like Philosophy, does it deprive us of our Senses, or, which is much the same, take away the Use of them.—Do but observe a Man coming from an Opera, you may see him beating Time with his Heels for half an Hour together. If he is young and nimble, perhaps, he cuts a few Capers, and presently falls a singing some Favourite Air. He comes up and salutes a Lady of Quality with an exquisite Air of Gallantry. In a Word, all is easy, all is Harmony, like the Entertainment from whence he comes. On the other Hand, do but look at a young Fellow of the University, as he is coming out of his College; how wild his Look! how fierce his Air! his Head full of Logick, and a Syllogism between his Teeth. No sooner is one University-Combat finish'd, than he meditates a new Attack, and is mighty busy in mustering up his warlike Arguments in order to demolish his Adversary. He is everlastingly out of Humour; all his Knowledge and Philosophy serve for nothing but to torment him.

Tell me, dear Sir, which is most useful to Society; that Study which plagues a Man, and puts him out of himself, and, under Pretence of imaginary Wisdom, makes him a real Fool; or that which amuses agreeably, cures the Spleen, and leaves the Mind in a perfect Tranquillity? This, Sir, and no other, is the grand Difference betwixt Musick and Philosophy. You may indeed say what you please, but, for my Part, I shall never alter my Opinion.

Mighty well argued, replied the Philosopher, with an Air of Contempt; I would advise you to spend all your Life in singing; by this Means you'll be nothing inferior to the Nightingale. As for me, I am
sensible

sensible, God has endow'd me with a Faculty of Thinking, and that I ought to make use of it. I do not pretend to hinder you from using those Gifts which Nature has bestow'd upon you; and I only ask the same Indulgence for myself.

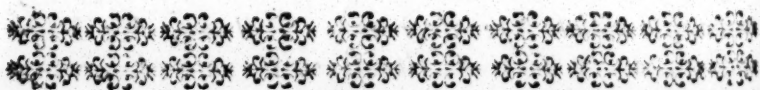
You call that Thinking, (replied our Adept in Musick) which is no better than abandoning one's self to all the Extravagance of a disorder'd Imagination; but you must allow me to mean, by Thinking, a quite different Thing. I apprehend, it signifies such a good Use of Reason as ministers to my Wants, and enables me to pass easily through Life. I believe 'tis better to leave racking our Brains with Things beyond our Reach, and to apply ourselves to that kind of Knowledge which is useful. Is not he the wiser Man, who knows how to live comfortably, to eat and drink, to sleep, laugh and sing, and, in short, to enjoy himself while Heaven is pleas'd to continue him in the World? Is not this, I say, the wiser Man, when compar'd with the Sciolist, that distracts his Soul with useless Speculations? Tell me, Mr Philosopher, what sort of Illness will your Learning cure? Will the Study of a Metaphysical Question ease a Man of the Megrims? So far from it, that it will make him ten times worse. The Patient had better, by half, repair to the Concert, and divert his Pain with the Sight of gay Faces, and the soft Airs of the Flute. What Good will your Philosophy do in a Fit of the Spleen? It will increase the Melancholy, and make a Man quite mad. But if he hears a Violin, his Ill-humour presently goes off, his Spirits are cheer'd, and his Reason returns. There cannot be a stronger Argument in favour of Musick, than to mention the good Effect it has every Day in Italy, in the Case of a Person bit by a Tarantula. Bring a whole College of Philosophers to barangue the sick Man upon the Hypothesis of Gassendi and Descartes, all will not hinder the Poison to spread; the poor

Man will certainly die, in spite of all your Eloquence. In this Case, let but a despised Fidler enter the Room, up starts the Patient: The Power of Musick makes him jump, leap and caper; and after he has danced about in this Manner, till he is quite fatigued, he falls fast asleep, and when he awakes, finds himself perfectly well. Such is the Effect of Musick! and I appeal to Mankind, if all the Philosophy in the World can do any thing like it.

I know not, my dear *Isaac*, whether you will relish the Conversation of my Fellow Travellers; but I assure you, it proves very diverting to me, and I pass the Time very agreeably in hearing their mutual Altercations.

Farewel, my Friend; may the God of our Fathers load thee with Blessings.

*Hamburgh, *****.*



LETTER CXXXII.

JACOB BRITO to AARON MONCECA.

THE Persecutions, my dear *Monceca*, to which our Brethren are exposed in this Country, has often led me to reflect on the reciprocal Calamities which the *Nazarenes* bring upon each other, in consequence of that horrid Maxim, *That it is not only lawful, but even necessary to destroy Hereticks.*

The Consequences of this inhuman Principle are equally fatal to Men of all Religions; and indeed it is surprising that those, who zealously maintain

maintain it, never consider how it exposes themselves, in their Turn, to the very same Evils they inflict upon their Adversaries. If once they reflected on the dreadful Inconveniencies which a persecuting Principle draws after it, they would soon change their Sentiments.

Heresy alters with the Climate. Hereticks in one Country are orthodox in another; and those who are the only orthodox in one Kingdom, would die at a Stake for Heresy in another. This Observation will be illustrated, if we consider ever so slightly the different Religions that are established in the different Countries of *Europe*. A Protestant is an Heretick at *Paris*; but let him cross the Sea, and immediately he will become one of the Elect at *London*. A Papist is an Idolater in *England*; while in *France*, 'tis the establish'd Belief, that none but such can be saved.

Thus we see how Nations, who differ widely in other Things, yet agree in this senseless Article, *That all are Hereticks who are not of their established Religion*. If we should suppose the hateful Principles of the *Inquisition* prevailing equally every where; Good God! What Horrors, what Devastation and Bloodshed would they soon spread thro' the World? In *Portugal*, in *Spain*, in *France*, in *Italy*, in *Austria*, *Bohemia* and *Poland*, they would butcher and burn, break on the Wheel and massacre, without Distinction, *Lutherans* and *Calvinists*, *Episcopalians* and *Presbyterians*; on the other Hand, in *Holland*, *Great Britain*, *Sweden*, *Denmark* and *Prussia*, they would hang, draw and quarter all in Communion with the Church of *Rome*, if the Doctrine of some mad Priests was regarded, and the Magistrate had no more Humanity than the Clergy. In *Muscovy* they would extirpate both Protestants and Roman Catholicks as equally Hereticks, in dissenting from the *Russian*

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Faith. And in *Turky* again, the same *Muscovites* would fall a Sacrifice to the Glory of *Mahomet*; as the *Turks* must die in *Persia* to the Honour of *Hali*.

Behold, my dear *Monceca*, the Confusion and Desolation, the Crimes and Impieties, which naturally arise from this single Maxim, *That we ought to persecute Hereticks, and force them to become orthodox, by the unanswerable Arguments of Tortures and Death*. If these bloody Persecutors were really what they only pretend, animated by a true Zeal for the Glory of God, they would be afraid to make use of the preposterous Means of Violence and Force in Religion, because these are Methods directly contrary to the great Law of Nature, and to that Idea which right Reason teaches every Man to form of the supreme Being. These furious Zealots should perceive, that, in persecuting those of a different Religion, among themselves, they expose their Brethren to the same Treatment, wherever they are scattered in other Countries. But, alas! they are guided only by Passion, or rather by Madness; and therefore, provided they can carry their Point at home, they give themselves no Concern about any bad Consequences of their Conduct that may happen abroad.

The Roman Catholics, or rather the Court of *Rome*, the Ecclesiasticks and the Monks, made use of all sorts of Means in order to get the Protestants banish'd out of *France*. After a great deal of Murder and Bloodshed, they accomplish'd their Design. But what followed? Why, truly, soon after, the Popish Religion itself received such a Blow as proved fatal to it, in a neighbouring Kingdom. *England* immediately barr'd Popery, without leaving any Hopes of its ever returning. It cost an unhappy Prince his three Kingdoms, for being so weak as to become the Dupe of a bigoted Clergy; and

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and the *French* Refugees in *England* served the Government for a Pretence to seize the Estates of Numbers of Papists, and banish them the Kingdom.

While, in *France*, they destroy'd, without Mercy, whatever had the least Appearance of Protestantism, the Prince of *Orange* wisely steps in, and reaps the Advantage of those Confusions. The Truth is, the mad Conduct of the Popish Clergy greatly advanced the Affairs of that Prince; to this he stood indebted for the Crown of *Great Britain*. If the *Jesuites*, from an Itch of Ambition, had not put King *James* upon so many arbitrary and illegal Acts, *William III.* would have found no Pretence of going over to *England*, in order to maintain the Liberties of an oppressed Nation. Historians of all Sides agree, that King *James's* greatest Misfortune was, his slavish Attachment and Submission to the *Jesuites*.

Madam *de Fayette*, though a zealous Catholick, acknowledges, in her Memoirs of the Court of *France*, under the Years 1688 and 1689, that when the *French* became throughly acquainted with the Character of that Prince, all the Regard they retained for him was a sort of pitiful Contempt.

We are inform'd, by this Lady, that the Archbishop of *Rheims*, *Maurice le Tellier*, seeing King *James* one Day coming from Mass, could not help saying, with a Sneer, *Behold that good Man! he sold three Kingdoms for one Mass.* It was also reckon'd a Mark of his bad Taste, that he was everlastingly beset with *Jesuites*, and that he affected to have it believed he was of their Order *.

The Continuators of *Rapin's* History of *England*, though they are sworn Enemies to the Protestant Religion, make no Scruple of telling the same Story, and of adding to it the following Reflecti-

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* Pages 120, 124, 155.

on; “The People of *France* went so far, as to
 “charge him (that is, King *James*) with his Mis-
 “fortunes, as if they were so many Crimes, which
 “had involved *France* in a burdensome and expen-
 “sive War, of which they foresaw the bad Ef-
 “fects*.”

It was not, however, King *James*, my dear *Monceca*, to whom the *French* ought to have ascribed these Mischiefs, which they saw would follow their espousing his Cause. It was to these, who gave him those pernicious Counsels, which had plunged him into an Abyss of inextricable Difficulties: It was to them they should have attributed these Evils: Upon them they should have poured all their Vengeance. The Misfortunes of that Prince were the Effect of *Jesuitical* Ambition, and the natural Consequences of their cruel Maxim, *That any Means are lawful to destroy Hereticks*.

The *English* had fresh before their Eyes the melancholy Example of the *French* Protestants; and they were afraid, not without Reason, that one Day they themselves should meet with the same Treatment. They reason’d thus: “If the King
 “begins to diminish our Privileges, and to enlarge
 “those of our Enemies, we shall, by little and
 “little, be render’d incapable to repel the open
 “Violence of the Court of *Rome*. At present,
 “they make use of Cunning; by and by, they’ll
 “have Recourse to Force. The *French* Prote-
 “stants set *Henry IV.* upon the Throne. So long
 “as he liv’d, none durst venture to oppress them;
 “but this Prince was scarce cold in the Grave,
 “when they began, first to trick, and then to
 “persecute them. Last of all, they banish’d ’em.
 “Thus they learn’d the full Meaning of that abo-
 “minable Maxim, *That the Laws both of God*
 “*and Man permit all Means to be used to extirpate*
 “Here-

* Continuation de *Rapin-Thoyras*, Tome II. Page 41.

“ Hereticks. Let us then prevent the Storm
 “ which threatens us. Let us strangle the Ser-
 “ pent we have nourish’d in our Bosom. Let us
 “ give the mortal Wound to Popery, by dethro-
 “ ning a King who protects it, and would establish
 “ it on the Ruins of all that is dear to us, our
 “ Religion and Liberty. If there is any thing
 “ base in such a Conduct, our Enemies sure dare
 “ not reproach us. We only rebel against a Popish
 “ Prince; and have not they taught us to do so,
 “ by refusing to acknowledge a Protestant one?
 “ Have they not published numberless Books to
 “ prove, that *Subjects owe no Allegiance to an He-
 “ retical Prince?* Their Pulpits sound with this
 “ Doctrine; their most celebrated Preachers have
 “ exhausted their Eloquence upon this Topick in
 “ the Midst of *Paris*, for these ten Years past.
 “ For once, we will adopt their Maxim. We
 “ do no more than dethrone a King impeach’d
 “ and convicted of Popery, which we justly reckon,
 “ of all Heresies, the most damnable.”

Observe, my dear *Monceca*, from this Reasoning
 of the *English*, what fatal Effects the Doctrine of
 Reprisals, in religious Wars, will inevitably pro-
 duce. Consider, at the same time, what Guilt the
 ungovern’d Fury of different Sects have brought
 upon whole Nations; for after all, notwithstanding
 the Danger the *English* Protestants were then in,
 I can, by no means, approve of their Conduct. I
 am thoroughly persuaded, that it is not lawful for
 Subjects, upon any Pretence, to take Arms against
 their Sovereign. This is a Principle I have often
 heard thee defend with a good deal of Warmth.
 But if once we admit this Maxim, *That Men are
 at Liberty to break Faith with Hereticks, and to
 make use of Force in Matters of Belief*, it will open
 a wide Gap to all Sorts of Disorder. This will
 shake

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shake the Thrones of Kings, and inspire into the simple Multitude a Spirit of Faction and Rebellion.

If this wholesome Doctrine was once universally establish'd throughout *Europe*, that *Religion has nothing to do with Government*, how happy would the Subject be! How secure would the Prince sit upon his Throne! It doth not much concern a King, one would imagine, if some of his Subjects sing in *French*, others in *English*, in *Dutch*, or in *German*, while others are of Opinion, that *Latin* is the only sacred Language. It signifies little to the Government, whether People assemble for religious Worship on *Saturday*, or on *Sunday*, provided they pay their Taxes, love their Country, and discharge all the Duties they owe to Society. But, the Politicians may object, while there are many different Religions in a State, 'tis impossible but they will produce Civil Wars. This I admit, if any one of these Religions maintain the pernicious Maxim, *That it is lawful to use all Methods for destroying those who differ from them*; and in this Case 'tis natural to suppose, that all the other Sects will unite for the Destruction of that one Religion, which they can't but look upon as a common Enemy. But, in a well regulated State, where the People are persuaded, that every Man has a Right to judge for himself, and serve God according to his Conscience, should there be five hundred different Religions in this State, it will never disturb the publick Peace.

To prove this, one needs but reflect upon the present State of *Holland* and *Great Britain*. How many different Sects are there in these Countries, and yet they live peaceably together. *Jews*, *Anti-Trinitarians*, *Quakers*, *Anabaptists*, *Presbyterians*, *Episcopalians*, *Lutherans*, &c. They may perhaps dispute a little warmly; but, if they can't agree

in

in Sentiments, they never dream of cutting one another's Throats. If there happens sometimes any Disturbance on account of Religion in *England*, all the different Parties agree to ascribe the Inconvenience to a Popish Spirit, and immediately enter into a League, Offensive and Defensive, against it. In short, they seem to be all equally afraid of the Effects of that hateful Principle, which authorises Men to persecute all whom they are pleased to call *Hereticks*.

To this Purpose we may alledge the Testimony of a certain Author, who must be allow'd by all a competent Judge of the Matter. *If any one (says he) shall ask, how far different Sects are to be tolerated? I answer, They ought all to stand upon equal Terms; they should all have an equal Liberty to maintain their Faith, by Disputes, by preaching in religious Assemblies, and by publishing Books. But as to Popery, it ought to be depriv'd of all Benefit of a Toleration; not indeed as a Religion, but as it is a Tyrannical Faction, which oppresses others. An Equality will not content its extravagant Demands; it must reign alone, and destroy utterly all that oppose it **.

To this remarkable Passage from the *Virgil* of *England*, I shall take Leave to add another from an illustrious Champion for Liberty, one too much a Philosopher to give himself up to any Prejudices on the Score of Religion. *Never fear (says he) that the Missionaries will fall out among themselves, when the Business of Dragooning is in hand. The Thomists and the Scotists, the Molinists and the Jansenists, forget their Differences, lay aside their Disputes, and labour very cordially together in the Execution of that Catholick Precept, Compel them to come in †.*

There

* *Milton's Miscellaneous Works.*
 Cit. Tome III. Page 339.

† *Bayle, Dictionnaire Hist. &*

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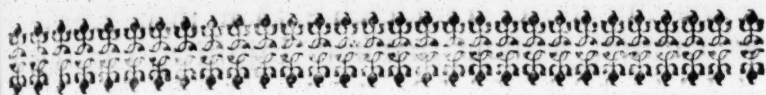
There is one Thing, my dear *Monceca*, which surprises me much, the Popish *Nazarenes* are by no means ignorant of the great Mischiefs which their violent Conduct brings upon their Brethren in other Countries. They know very well what Prejudices are raised against their Brethren, and what Reproaches they suffer on account of their Persecutions and boundless Ambition; and yet, instead of pursuing gentler Measures, they grow every Day more insolent: Instead of stopping the Fury of Persecution, it seems to be their sole View, to propagate this inhuman Disposition throughout all Nations, and to perpetuate it through all Ages. On the other Hand, their Antagonists are led by the same malicious Spirit, when they punish the Innocent for the Cruelties committed by their Brethren, and to which they are no way accessary. What Connection is there between an *English* Papist and an *Italian* Jesuit? or, why should one suffer for the Faults of another. It is, without doubt, as great Injustice to punish an honest Roman Catholick in *Ireland*, as it was to banish a Protestant of the same Character in *France*. Is it not absurd to make Reprisals in Matters of Religion? What Occasion of Triumph! What Subject for Reflection doth this partial Conduct of the *Nazarene* Sects afford to an honest and thinking *Jew*!

Farewel, dear *Monceca*. Live content and happy.

Lisbon, *****.



LETTER



LETTER CXXXIII.

AARON MONCECA to ISAAC ONIS.

IT is not above five or six Days, my dear *Isaac*, since I arriv'd at *London*; it is therefore impossible for me, as yet, to give thee any exact Account of the Character of the *English*. I have indeed taken notice of several Things that strike my Fancy, and seem highly deserving the Attention of a Stranger; but I have not yet had Opportunity to examine them sufficiently. It is extremely difficult to give a just Character of the *English*, for this Reason, they generally possess Virtues which seem directly opposite to a great many Vices with which they are likewise tainted. The Contradiction which one finds in the Manners, and Turn of Mind amongst those People, at first Sight, appears very uncommon; so that it requires a pretty nice Enquiry, before one can form a Judgment of their good or ill Qualities.

If a Man would give a just and true Idea of this Nation, it is absolutely necessary that he divest himself of all national Prejudices; he must forget that he is a *Frenchman*, a *German*, or an *Italian*, and form his Sentiments only by those Rules which the Light of Nature furnishes. It is my Opinion, that a Judge, thus qualified, will find the *English* possess'd of a great many shining Qualities, though shaded with several Follies and Vices. But, as there is no Nation upon Earth, whose
Virtue

Virtue is not abated by some Mixture of Vice, if the Excellencies and true Worth of the *English* be found far more considerable than their Defects, we cannot, without manifest Injustice, run them down as a Nation; nor can we expect, since they are Men, that they should be entirely exempted from the Imperfections of human Nature.

I observe, since I came here, that the Inhabitants of this Country are generally large Body'd, well-made, agile and robust; and it is commonly said, that these external Advantages of Body are attended with proportionable Endowments of Mind. Many intelligent People have assured me, that the Vigour of an *English* Genius is even superior to the Strength of an *Englishman's* Body. I refer thee, for Proof of this, to my subsequent Letters: In the mean time, I promise to communicate my Discoveries on that Subject, with a Sincerity becoming a Philosopher, who looks upon all Mankind to be but one great Nation.

The first Thing I took notice of, on my Arrival at *London*, was that Plenty and Magnificence whereby the *English* are distinguish'd among Strangers. I have likewise particularly examin'd that Fierceness, which some are apt to call Insolence, and, from the best Observations I have been able to make, I can by no means think it deserves so harsh a Name. If we were to judge of the *English* by the Talk and Opinion of other Nations concerning them, we must often fall into very gross Errors. Most part of the Memoirs, written by Travellers, favour highly of that Prejudice against *England*, which generally prevails among other Nations.

It can't indeed be denied, but the *English* have given some Handle for this, by their common Foible of preferring themselves to all the rest of Mankind. And even this Fault is not peculiar to them,

them; it is common, in some Degree, to every Nation. To speak Truth, the *English* carry the Matter too far. As they are rich and powerful, and consequently in a Capacity to over-top their Neighbours, they may perhaps behave with too little Ceremony. But all the Stories, which are spread abroad, of their Brutality and Rudeness, deserve Contempt rather than Correction. I must however allow, that the *English* are not very fond of cultivating Acquaintance with Strangers; and if they happen to fall into the Company of such, they will every now and then remind them, that they think themselves their Betters, in every Respect. This Humour is, without doubt, very indecent and ridiculous. Far be it from me to excuse a Behaviour so disagreeable, so contrary to Reason and good Sense. But still, it should be remember'd, there is a wide Difference betwixt Insolence, and a good Opinion of one's self. In all the World, we will scarce find a Creature more full of himself than a *French Petit-maitre*; and yet no Man is more civil, more polite or complaisant, than he. To say the Truth, it is not the good Opinion which the *English* have of themselves, but the Vanity of telling the World they have it, which gives the Offence.

A Stranger, in this Country, cannot walk the Streets, but he shall hear himself taken to Pieces, and every thing about him, differing from the Fashions of the Place, severely censur'd. This highly disgusts a Traveller; he can't but be out of Humour to see Contempt thrown, not only upon himself, but also upon all his Countrymen, who are wounded through his Sides. He therefore forgets all the good Qualities of the *English*, and carries home with him the Memory of their Faults only; these he paints in such Colours as Spleen and Resentment furnish him with.

I have been at some Pains, my dear *Isaac*, to discover the Source of the proud and haughty Temper of the *English*, of their notorious Contempt of other Nations, and particularly of the *French*; and I think now, I have light upon the true Cause. Those Foreigners who have settled in *England*, by their mean Conduct, have inspir'd the Natives with a contemptible Idea of all their Countrymen, while they are naturally prone to think highly of themselves. They who have opulent Fortunes, and swim in the Midst of Riches and Plenty, look down with Pity on Men struggling with all the Hardships of Poverty and Want. As to those of narrow Circumstances, in this Country, they don't make use of all Methods to advance their Fortune; but are satisfied with the little they possess, so long as they enjoy Liberty, which they esteem infinitely preferable to the greatest Treasures. We see but few *Englishmen* roaming abroad to seek their Fortune. They would blush at the Thoughts of enriching themselves by following the Profession of an Adventurer. Commerce is their only Resource to acquire a Fortune; a Method no less reputable to themselves, than useful to their Country. It is no Wonder then, that a Nation of such a philosophical Turn of Mind, should despise those whom they see traversing the Globe in quest of Money, and perhaps submitting to very scandalous Means in order to compass their End.

One may justly say, that those of the *English* who are rich, imagine their superior Fortune gives them a Right to be insolent and haughty; and that those of low Life are insolent and vain, because they know how to be content with a little.

The great Number of Fortune-hunters which swarm in *London*, confirm the *English* in their mean Opinion of Foreigners, especially of the *French*.

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French. Such as have never been in foreign Countries, form their Notion of all Strangers from the Character of the few which they have been acquainted with, rashly judging of the Stock by a wrong Sample.

Thus I have accounted for the general Contempt the *English* have for all Foreigners. To this Contempt they join an implacable Hatred of the *French*, upon whom, they alledge, they cannot bestow even the least Degree of Esteem. The Vulgar are of the same Mind with the Quality in this Point. Indeed the whole Nation are unanimous in their ill Opinion of the *French*. There are several Reasons which concur to occasion this inveterate Prejudice. The Wars subsisting, almost without Intermiſſion, between the two Nations; their mutual opposite Interests; and, to sum up all, Religion, which, when accompanied with Superstition, never fails to carry Resentment to the utmost Extremity.

If the Differences that have continued so long between *France* and *England*, had been of the same Kind with those which have sometimes happen'd between the *Germans* and *French*, the Conclusion of the War would have been the End of all the Animosity subsisting between the two Nations. When People fight for nothing but Glory, and the Interest of their Prince, as soon as this End is accomplish'd, all is quiet, no body remembers the Quarrels which are past. Tho' it often happens, in this Case, that whole Provinces change their Masters, the Subjects remain just where they were, neither better nor worse: They enjoy the same Estates, the same Rights and Privileges, under the new, as they did under the old Sovereign. But whenever *France* and *England* go to War with each other, the two Sovereigns are by no means the only Persons concern'd in the Dispute. Every

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Subject has an Interest; and there are as many Enemies, as there are Merchants in each respective Kingdom. When a *French Ship* is taken by the *English*, the Injury immediately affects all the Owners of the Ship and Cargo. Every Burgefs of *St Malo*, every trading Man in *Dunkirk*, becomes the sworn Enemy of the Merchants of *London*; as, on the other hand, every Captain of a *French Privateer* may be reckon'd, as it were, a Petty Sovereign engag'd in his own Quarrel against the *English Nation*.

The Wars between the *Empire* and *France* may be accounted the Quarrel of two Crown'd Heads; but the Wars between the *French* and *English* are the Quarrel of two whole Nations, and the Ground of every new Difference serves to increase the old Enmity. Religion has often set the two Kingdoms by the Ears. This, Experience witnesses, is commonly a Source of the greatest national Antipathy. All Men have the utmost Abhorrence of those who would presume to force their Consciences; but this Abhorrence will become much greater, if those who would impose a Religion upon us, are neither our Masters, our Friends, nor our Countrymen. The Retreat of King *James* into *France*, the Entertainment given him there, the many Attempts made by the *Grand Monarch* in his Favour, have incensed the *English* more than a War of twenty Years Continuance.

Another Thing, which seems to sooth the Pride and Vanity of that Nation, is the poor and miserable, and consequently slavish, Condition of the *French Refugees*, who took Sanctuary in this Country when the Protestant Religion was entirely suppress'd in *France*. Now, I'll admit, that Persons robb'd of their Estates, and banish'd their native Country, and who owe their very Lives to the Charity of the *English*, may be excused if they

pay greater Respect to their Benefactors than would be proper in different Circumstances. But, after all, some Bounds should be kept, and they ought not to throw away the grossest Flatteries upon those who despise them, and most of all on account of those very Flatteries which they themselves receive.

The *English* who accompanied King *James* in his Exile, were Patterns to the *French* Refugees. These were banish'd as well as they: They had the very same Reasons to fall out with their Country, but they wisely distinguish'd betwixt that particular Party which favour'd King *William*, and were then at the Head of the Government, and the Nation in general; and therefore they were as true *Englishmen* at *St Germans*, as at *London*.

How is it possible but so brave a People, who have a Love for their Country so deeply engraven in their Hearts, and who are able to maintain their natural Greatness of Soul amidst Banishment and numberless Misfortunes; how is it possible, I say, but such a People must despise those mean spirited Wretches, who are ever depreciating the Country which gave them Birth, blaming what a few Years ago they commended, and implicitly approving whatever formerly they censur'd? It is certain, this abject Behaviour of the *French* hath, in some measure, drawn the Contempt of the *English* upon them. They'd have met with the same Relief in their Misfortunes, if they had preserv'd their Spirits, and shewn a Resolution not to purchase Favours at the Expence of a Debt which every brave Soul owes to himself; and the *English* would have esteem'd them much more.

Farewel, my dear *Isaac*; and let me often hear from thee.

London, *****.





LETTER CXXXIV.

AARON MONCECA to ISAAC ONIS.

I Begin, my dear *Isaac*, to be so well acquainted with the *English* Nation, as to give thee a particular Account of them. I shall not, at present, offer any Remarks concerning the Nobility, which are distinguished into several Ranks; but only endeavour to give thee a distinct and just Idea of the inferior sort of People.

The *English* are not so stupid as to think Trade a Disgrace to them. The Merchant here makes a very considerable Figure; and while he makes his private Fortune, he contributes, at the same Time, to enrich his Country. Nothing is more common in this Country, than to see the Sons of Knights serving an Apprenticeship to a Merchant, Nay, several Lords think it no Discredit to their Families, that their younger Brothers and Children are bred up in the Mercantile Way.

The Idea of an *English* Merchant is very different from the Idea of one of the same Business in another Nation. There is nothing in their Profession, but what tends to elevate and raise their Spirits, and therefore they think in quite another Way from the Merchants in *France*, *Germany*, or *Italy*. They have as quick a Sense of Honour as of Interest, and are as ambitious to advance the Good of their Country, as their own private Fortunes. Every single Tradesman has a double Mo-

tive

tive to awaken his Industry, Self-love, and the Love of his Country; the publick Good, and his own particular Interest, spur him on: To this Cause we may ascribe the glorious Figure Trade makes at *London*.

There is another Thing which distinguishes the *English* Merchants, they generally understand how to enjoy the Riches they have acquired. They are indefatigable for some Years, and then sit down contented with the Estate they have raised; they leave off Business, retire to the Country, and live like Gentlemen.

This Nation alone seems to have a just Sense of the Rights of Mankind, and of that Equality which Nature has established among them. The Traders are not the only People who scorn to be imposed upon by empty Sounds and swelling Titles; even the meanest in the Kingdom are guided by Reason in their Behaviour to the Great; in their Addresses to those above them, they discover nothing of that slavish Fear and Admiration so common in other Countries. A Lord here has only a Respect paid him proportion'd to his Usefulness: If he is good-natured, courteous and hospitable, he will be esteem'd and rever'd; and these Marks of Respect will be so much the more agreeable, because he is sure they would never be conferred upon him, if he had not Merit to deserve them. If, on the other hand, he has not Virtue to command the Attention and Regard of the Publick, he is despised as a Burden to the State, and an useless Member of Society. He relishes no Pleasure from the Privileges of his Birth, and passes the Time as heavily at *London*, as a disgraced Courtier does at *Versailles*. Nay further, my dear *Isaac*, I add, that a generous *Englishman* appears to be more mortified, when under Disgrace from his Country, than a *Frenchman*, when he has lost the
good

good Graces of his Prince. Thou wilt cease to wonder at this, when I observe to thee, that a Passion for Glory and the Love of his Country, are the ruling Principles of every *English* Breast.

This Way of honouring the Great, is not the only Respect in which the lower sort of People resemble those which are above them; the Likeness holds in most other Cases, both with respect to their good and ill Qualities. There is not an *Englishman* but values himself upon thinking, and following the Dictates of Reason; and his natural good Sense supplies the Want of Education.

The very Dress of this People, is a Sign of the Ease and Prosperity in which they live. One observes an Air of Plenty even among the meanest. 'Tis the same Affluence which makes the Mob insolent, and Men of Rank haughty and proud. Self-conceit is the prevailing Foible of the whole Country. Let their Condition of Life be ever so low, they have a high Opinion of themselves; they think it Honour enough to be born *Englishmen*; this is Title sufficient to claim Respect.

I took notice, in my last, that this Nation possesses Virtues and Vices equally great, and that one sees, in the same Character, sometimes, a very strange Contrast.

I am now going to support my Observation by some Examples. The *English* have great and noble Souls, and therefore they abhor Treachery. This Disposition will not permit them to see two Persons fight but upon equal Terms. If a Man, in the Streets of *London*, should presume to cane another, who had nothing in his Hand to defend himself, he would certainly be mobb'd: But if any Person should be so cruel as to draw upon his naked Enemy, he would be in Danger of being pull'd to Pieces, or thrown into the *Thames* by the very Boys of the Neighbourhood.

These

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These we may look upon as the Sallies of an impetuous Generosity ; and they are excusable, because well meant. But these very Men, who can't bear to see two Men engaged on unequal Terms, are as fond of the Diversion of Gladiators, as ever the ancient *Romans* were. Is there not something barbarous in beholding, with Pleasure, such bloody Spectacles ? And, when they can't have the Opportunity to see an Encounter between two *Masters of Defence*, they divert themselves with Cock-fighting, Bull-baiting, &c. This natural Ferocity, it seems, must be gratified ; and, in room of Men, they are content to sacrifice Animals to this Humour. Who could believe, that People, whose Diversions are so cruel, are, notwithstanding, human and charitable themselves ? And yet this holds true with respect to the *English*. Few among them, of tolerable Circumstances, will refuse an Alms to the Poor ; and for this they do not stay till they are asked ; the very Sight of Want is sufficient to move them, and they think it Reward enough to have the Pleasure of relieving the Miserable.

Another very remarkable Contradiction in the Temper of this Nation is, their Contempt of Trifles, attended with an excessive Fondness for what is called the *Fashion*. It is truly astonishing to see, in the same People, Sentiments and Inclinations so diametrically opposite. To this Oddity I may add another no less unaccountable, I mean their Propensity to chicanery. When one considers the vast Number of Law-suits, which are daily decided in *London*, and, at the same Time, reflects on the good Sense and Prudence which runs through the Discourse and Books of the *English*, one would be tempted to believe that they all speak like Philosophers, think like Attornies, and act like *Normans* ; as, it can't be denied, they are descended

scended from these last. One Thing, however, is certain, that false Witnesses swarm as much in *England* as in *Normandy*.

As for Religion, there seems to be as many different Sorts of it in *England* as there are Inhabitants. If there was an Act of Parliament obliging every one to publish his Creed, I verily believe there would not be two found alike. This vast Variety, however, does not hinder them from being extremely zealous, each in his own Way. A *Churchman* hates a *Presbyterian* as bitterly as a *Jansenist* does a *Jesuit*. The *Presbyterian*, on the other hand, is sure to pay the *Churchman* home in his own Coin: And both Parties heartily unite in detesting a *Papist*; while the *Papist*, in his Turn, takes Care to come behind with neither *. It is pretty hard to reconcile this whimsical Behaviour of the *English* with their good Sense, and with their generous Toleration in Matters of Religion. To speak freely on this Head, it must be allow'd, that every particular Nation has Follies, as it were, peculiar to itself; and that People may be pronounced the wisest and happiest, whose Foibles are fewest and least considerable.

On this Principle, my dear *Isaac*, 'tis my Opinion, that *England* is very much indebted to Nature: For, of all the different Follies parcell'd out amongst the various Nations of the World, the *English* have, for their Share, the lightest, and the least hurtful to good Sense. They have many shining Virtues to balance a few National Weaknesses. We may observe amongst them such a Constancy, as none but Philosophers, in other Countries, pretend to. They have the Courage to declare against ill Customs, though established by An-

* *Inde furor vulgi, quod numina vicinorum
Odit quisque locus; cum solos credat habendos.
Esse Deos, quos ipse colit.* —————

Juv. Sat. XV.

Antiquity. It signifies nothing to tell them, that their Fathers approved of such a Thing, and that 'tis Arrogance to make Innovations contrary to the Sense of former Ages: No sooner does common Sense discover the Error of any Custom, of ever so long Standing, than down it must go. One may commonly hear an *Englishman* reason thus, *We have play'd the Fool, in such an Instance, for two or three hundred Years; it is high Time to alter our Measures, that our Posterity may not have Ground for the same Complaints against us, which we now make against our Forefathers.*

It gives me Pleasure, my dear *Isaac*, to see, in a whole Nation, such a Disposition to make use of their Reason; and this appears the more extraordinary, because most other Nations harraß and persecute such as have the Resolution to act in this Manner.

Another essential Quality of the *English* is, their Contempt of Ceremony or Finicalness. A *Petit Maitre* at *London* makes a very ridiculous Figure; he is equally the Jest of all Ranks of People: He is commonly regarded as a pretty Monkey, or some other Animal, which is carried about for a Shew at publick Fairs. I can't but admire this judicious way of Thinking in the *English*; and if Custom did not blind the Eyes of other Nations, they would view the affected Airs of the finical Gentleman in the same Light, and be equally diverted with his Grimaces, as with a Monkey's dancing on a Rope.

The *English* are commonly charged with Levity and Inconstancy. Indeed History plainly demonstrates their unequal Behaviour to their Princes. In order to excuse this, they alledge, that they have never been defective in Loyalty to their Sovereigns, but in case of absolute Necessity, for the Preservation of their Rights. If this Plea was just, one might

might conclude that the Love of Liberty had been the Cause of all their Revolutions. But notwithstanding all they pretend to extenuate their Fault, one may easily see, that this *Liberty*, about which they pretend to make such a Pother, has often served only for a specious Pretence to hide their natural Love of Change. Ambitious and designing Men know how to take Advantage of the Credulity of the People, when they have artfully alarm'd their Fears, and excited their Jealousy with respect to their Liberties, they direct the Motions of popular Fury to raise themselves to Places of greatest Profit and Power in the State.

To be satisfied of the Truth of this, we need only examine the different Revolutions that have happened in *England*. We shall see that they have happened under Princes of very opposite Characters. The *English* were as little pleased with the dull and inactive Temper of *Henry VI.* as with the quick and enterprising Genius of *Edward IV.* They deposed both these Princes; and, as an Effect of the same Inconstancy, peculiar to this Nation, they were equally dissatisfied with the soft and effeminate Life of *Charles II.* and the Capacity and Application of *William III.* They cabal'd and plotted against both, with equal Fury, though they had raised both these Princes to the Throne with Marks of the highest Joy and universal Satisfaction.

These Troubles, under Kings of such opposite Characters, are a plain Demonstration that the Fault lies in the Body of the Nation. It is further evident, that the Rights and Liberties of the Subject have not been at the Bottom of every Revolution, because some of them have happened under Kings, who, instead of oppressing the Nation, secured and extended their Privileges: And yet,

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yet, after all, we must acknowledge, that though *English* Sovereigns have not always occasioned the Disturbances which happened in their Dominions, yet they have often done it.

Farewel, my dear *Isaac*, live content and happy.

London, *****.



LETTER CXXXV.

AARON MONCECA to ISAAC ONIS.

THE *English*, my dear *Isaac*, allow their Kings just such a Power, as some Philosophers have ascribed to the Deity. They may do as much Good as they please; but for Mischief, the Law puts it beyond their Reach. They may pardon a Criminal, but can take away the Life of no Man. It is the Law, and the Judges only, who are invested with a Power of punishing Offenders in this Country. The King has the most considerable Employments in his Gift: He nominates the Bishops to their Sees, and presents many of the inferior Clergy to their Livings; but he has no Power to remove People from their Offices. This must be done by a legal Process. As long as those in Places behave well, and are firmly attach'd to the Interest of their Country, they have nothing to dread, either from the Caprice or Ill-humour of their Prince; for he is absolute Master of none but his own Domesticks.

As the Crown has its Prerogatives, so the Subjects have their Rights. It is an establish'd Maxim in *England*, and openly defended by every Lawyer, *That the King has two Superiors, God and the Law* *; and to them he is as much accountable, as the meanest of his Subjects.

“ It is by no means true (*said an Englishman, a Friend of mine, to me*) that the People were created to be Slaves to the Prince, and to afford him the cruel Pleasure of tormenting them. He must be void of common Sense who dares assert, that God ever made one Man to be the Plague of all the rest. Since therefore Kings are appointed, not for the Destruction, but for the Protection and Good of their People, it follows, that, like other Men, they ought to observe those Laws which are made to promote the publick Happiness of Society. If, indeed, we could be certain of having always good and wise Kings, there would be no need to limit their Power and Authority; their own Integrity and Virtue would restrain them more effectually from doing Mischief, than the strongest Law or most solemn Compact. But Experience teaches, that the Throne is often fill'd with Persons of a vicious Disposition, who stand much in need of Laws to controul them. How happy had it been for the *Romans*, if they had timeously check'd the Cruelties of *Tiberius*, *Caligula* and *Nero*, and sent them a packing as soon as they degenerated into Tyrants?

“ Our Kings, (*continued my Friend*) when they ascend the Throne, enter into a Contract with their Subjects; so long as they observe the Conditions of it, they have all imaginable Respect paid them, they enjoy all the Prerogatives which belong to the greatest Monarchs, and are ablo-

“ lute

* *Rex in regno suo superiores habet Deum & legem.*

" lute in every thing that contributes to the Hap-
 " piness of the Kingdom. If indeed they forget
 " their Promises, they run the Hazard of raising
 " a dangerous Sedition against their Persons and
 " Government. But, to avoid this, 'tis only ne-
 " cessary that they be honest Men, and remember
 " that, at their Coronation, they took an Oath,
 " not only to cause others observe the Laws, but
 " to observe them themselves. Why should the
 " People be bound by their Word more than their
 " Sovereign? A King, who becomes a Tyrant,
 " teaches his Subjects, by his Example, to break
 " their Faith, and despise the most solemn En-
 " gagement.

" But it may be alledged, our Lives and For-
 " tunes depend upon our Governors. It is true,
 " and we should be ready to sacrifice both for their
 " Sake, if they are good and just. They are the
 " Fathers of their Country, and we ought to be-
 " have towards them with filial Respect. But
 " this dutiful Submission must cease whenever the
 " mutual Relation is dissolved upon which it is
 " founded.

" If Kings are above Law, and can dispense
 " with it when they please, to what Purpose are
 " their Promises to observe this Law. All that
 " they do in this Respect, and all the Assurances
 " they give are a mere Farce. When a Prince, at
 " his Coronation, swears to observe certain Rules,
 " we are to look upon these sacred Oaths as an
 " ancient, but useless, Ceremony, which serves
 " only to shew that our Forefathers were Free-
 " men, but that we, their Posterity, are degene-
 " rated into mere Slaves. There is no body, I
 " believe, quite so mad, as roundly to speak this
 " out. The most zealous Advocates for arbitrary
 " Government acknowledge, that a Sovereign
 " ought to keep his Promises, while at the same

" Time they assert he may break them with Impunity! An Absurdity beyond all Comprehension!"

It can't be denied, my dear *Isaac*, that all this, at first Sight, appears very plausible. If once we admit that Kings are bound by their Promise, we can scarce refuse that it is lawful to withdraw our Obedience when they break their Word. It seems a necessary Consequence of the *pactum conventum* between the Sovereign and his Subjects, that, when one of the contracting Parties is deficient in performing the Conditions upon which the Distinction of King and Subjects is founded, the Relation then ceases, and the other Party is loosed from his Obligation.

It must be allowed, that many Writers of Note, who were far enough from favouring Sedition, positively assert, that a Prince cannot break the Contract with his People, without being guilty of Injustice.

" It must be admitted, (*says the learned Grotius*) that when Princes undertake to govern by certain Laws, their Government is, in some Sense, limited; whether these Restrictions regard the Power itself wherewith they are invested, or only the Exercise of that Power. In the latter Case, whatever they do contrary to their Engagements is therefore an Act of Injustice, because a Promise confers a Right on those to whom it is made.

" But, in the other Case, the Act is not only unjust, but also null and void for want of a legal Power in the Agent *."

You

* *Fatendum tamen id ubi sit arctius quodammodo reddi imperium sive obligatio dumtaxat cadat in exercitium actus, sive etiam directe in ipsam facultatem. Priore specie, actus contra promissum factus est injustus, quia vera promissio jus dat ei, cui promittitur. Altera autem specie, erit etiam nullus defectu facultatis. Hugo Grotius de jure belli & pacis, Tome I. Page 121.*

You see here, my dear *Isaac*, the Question decided in a very positive Manner, by an Author far enough above Suspicion. But he explains himself still more clearly in another Place, where one would imagine he had forgot his own Principles. "If it be asked, (*says he*) What shall be the Consequence, if this Condition be in the Contract, viz. *If the King breaks his Word, he shall, in that Case, forfeit his Crown.* I answer, That even, in this Case, the Regal Power, while it subsists, is absolute; but being suspended on a Condition which is not performed, it expires, like a temporary Government*."

Thus thou seest, my dear *Isaac*, that even my free-born *Englishman* could scarce say more against Arbitrary Power, and the Prince's violating his Oaths with Impunity. No body, however, will say, that *Grotius* is an Anti-Royalist. And, should any think to bring him off, by alledging, that there never is any such Contract between the People and the Prince, wherein 'tis expressly stipulated, that, in some Cases, the latter shall forfeit his Crown; all this will by no means destroy what he had before advanced: For tho', in this Compact between the King and his Subjects, it be nowhere declared, that, by the Violation thereof, the Prince shall lose his Title. This Condition is, notwithstanding, implied in the Agreement; because, without supposing this Power in the People, the Contract itself would be a Rope of Sand. It might indeed bind the Subjects to their Prince, but could lay no manner of Restraint upon the Sovereign. Such Engagements must be real, or vain and useless. The whole World, I presume, will

X 3

assert

* *Quod si additur, si rex fidem fallat, ut tum regno cadat? Ne quidem imperium desinet esse summum, sed erit habendi modus immixtus per conditionem & imperium temporario non abstrahibile.* Grotius, Ibid. Page 125.

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assert the former, and that both contracting Parties ought to observe them. It follows as a Consequence of this, that both Parties reserve to themselves a Right to enforce the Observance of them; and though it be not expressed in the mutual Compact, that when the Prince breaks his Engagements, he shall lose his Authority; yet this Clause seems necessary to the Validity and Security of the Contract.

These Reasons, my dear *Isaac*, seem unanswerable against such as maintain, *That it is in no Case lawful for Subjects to take Arms against their Prince*. I must, however, declare, that 'tis my firm Belief, the People can't have a Right to dethrone their Sovereign; and I add further, were they invested with such a Power, they could scarce miss to abuse it, and so bring upon themselves the greatest Calamities.

When we fancy that the Compacts between Kings and their Subjects are nothing different from those between private Persons, we fall into a very great Mistake. We ought to distinguish between the Promises of Kings and those of Subjects; the latter may be compell'd to perform their Duty, because they are subject to Man, but Princes, having none above them upon Earth, are accountable only to God. The Engagements of Kings to their People are not therefore useless, because they cannot be compell'd to keep them; for these Promises bind the Conscience before God, and so lay a Restraint upon their Wills.

Reason and the publick Peace both concur to establish this Doctrine. For, let it be once admitted, that, under Pretence of having violated the Laws, Princes may be dethroned, to what Misery and Inconvenience would States continually be exposed! An inconstant, whimsical People, subject to receive all Impressions from designing Men,
would

would be, at all Times, ready to throw off their Allegiance. Turbulent and factious Spirits would, in this Case, never want a specious Pretext for Sedition and Rebellion.

"I allow, (*says Grotius* *) that Kings were ordained for no other End but to administer Justice to their Subjects; but it does not follow from hence, that the People are above their Kings. Guardians are as certainly appointed for the Good of their Pupils: This Office, notwithstanding, gives the Guardian a Power over his Ward. It will naturally be objected here, that a Guardian, for Male-administration, may be discharged from his Trust; and from hence some may infer, that People have the same Right with respect to their Prince. But the Case is very different; for the Guardian has a Superior, to whom he is accountable; whereas the Prince has none. As in Government there cannot be an infinite Progression, the highest Power must rest in the King, or, in a Republick, in the Senate, which acknowledges no Power above it except God."

If we carefully consider these Reasons, dear *Isaac*, 'tis not possible but we will be convinced by them, and allow, that, in Compacts between Sovereigns and Subjects, Reason and the Publick Good demand, that Heaven only should judge when the former are guilty of Breach of Faith.

The

* *Verum esse post Herodotum; Herodotus post Hesiodum dixit fruen-*
de justitiæ causâ reges constitutos. sed non ideo consequens est quod
illi inferunt populos rege esse superiores: nam & tutela pupilli causâ re-
perta est, & tamen tutela jus est ac potestas in pupillum. Nec est quod
inter aliquis tutorem, si malè rem pupillarem administret, amoveri
posse, quare & in rege idem jus esse debere; nam in tutore hoc procedit
qui superiorem habet; at in imperiis, quia progressus in infinitum non
datur, omnino in aliquâ aut personâ aut cæu constituendum est quorum
peccata, quia superiorem se judicem non habent Deus (ibi, cura pecu-
liari esse testator. Grotius ubi supra, Tome I. Lib. I. Cap. I.
Page 106.

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The professed Advocates for the Rights of the People fondly imagine, that any Respect for the Character of the Prince, after he has broke his Word, is the Effect of Prejudice, and that the Royalists want Spirit to shake it off. But this is a Mistake; for the contrary is evident from the Examples of many brave Men, who, notwithstanding they were born in a Republick jealous of its Liberty even to Excess, have strongly maintain'd, that it never can be lawful for Subjects to take up Arms against their Sovereign, let his Faults be ever so great.

We ought, (says a famous Roman Historian) to bear the Luxury and Avarice of our Governors, as we do Famine, Hurricanes, and other natural Evils. There will be Vices as long as there are Men; but the mischievous Effects of these are not constant, and are more than balanced by the Benefits arising from Government.*

Will any alledge, my dear *Isaac*, that a Man nursed up in *Rome*, and who, with his Mother's Milk, had suck'd in Republican Principles, can possibly retain the least Prejudice in favour of Regal Power? I can't believe that any Man living can assert so glaring an Absurdity.

Adieu, dear *Isaac*. May the God of our Fathers multiply Blessings upon thee.

*London, *****.*

LETTER

* *Quomodo sterilitatem, aut nimios imbres, & cetera natura mala ita luxum vel avaritiam dominantium tolerate. Vicia erunt donec homines, sed neque hec continua, & meliorum interventu pensantur. Tit. Liv. Hist. Lib. IV. Cap. lxxiv. No. 4.*



LETTER CXXXVI.

AARON MONCECA to ISAAC ONIS.

THE Grandees of this Country pay much the same Regard to the Court, as the inferior Sort of People pay to them: For, as the common People honour a Lord only in proportion to his Virtue and Merit, so the Nobility, in general, are attach'd to the Court no farther than it preserves the Rights, and consults the Happiness of the Nation.

There is one Thing very extraordinary in *England*, and in a manner peculiar to the Country; it is this, a sincere Love and Devotion for his Country enters into the Character of a Courtier. In all other Countries, the Courtier is no better than a vile Slave; he is all blind Submission to his Prince, and must equally flatter his Virtues and his Vices. In the *English* Court, only Probity and Merit command Veneration. When they discern, in the King himself, Faults that may prove hurtful to the State, instead of flattering them, they apply themselves to provide a Remedy against the threatening danger.

This Greatness of Soul is a Consequence of the natural Genius of the *English*: They are not, generally speaking, ambitious of publick Employments, but often prefer the Enjoyment of a private Life. In *France*, all the Gentlemen of the Court, and also those of Rank in the Country,
are

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are so accustom'd to bear publick Offices, that they would think themselves highly disgraced, and very unhappy, were they deprived of them. There is no Difficulty that they will not surmount to raise themselves to Posts of Honour; there is no Mean so base, that they will not make a Step to Preferment. Among them the Love of their Country is a mere Chimera; they are quite easy to see the Misery of a whole Nation, provided they themselves can arrive at such Employments, as put it in their Power to be revenged upon them who slighted or injured them, while they were in a private Station. The *English* have a very different Way of Thinking; there is not a Man amongst them but would scorn to be the first Slave. The Character of a Free-man appears to them an Honour infinitely above that splendid Servitude, which bewitches most Men in other Courts of *Europe*. There is many a brave Peasant, in this Country, who would not sacrifice his Reason and Liberty to raise himself to the highest Post of Honour and Profit in the Kingdom.

It is in *England*, my dear *Isaac*, where one may say, that Truth dares approach even to the Throne itself, and appears there with uncommon Lustre. Happy the Nation where this wise Custom is established! And not only the Nation, but the Prince too finds his Advantage in it; the prudent Advice and Representation of his sincere Friends, have often rescued him from those Errors into which his Passions would have betray'd him. No King ever repented his listening to those who faithfully admonish'd him of his Faults; whereas many unhappy Princes have been misled, and even totally ruined, by the malignant Breath of Flatterers.

There is no Man in the World, says *Montagne*, who stands more in need of free and faithful Admonitions than a King. — They often find themselves, before they

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they are aware, hated and despised by their Subjects, for Actions which they might have easily avoided.

—Favourites, for the most Part, regard their own Interest more than their Master's; nor indeed can one blame them much for so doing, since the Liberties of a true Friendship are inconsistent with that Delicacy of Behaviour which Princes expect should be exercised towards them, and would commonly prove fatal Experiments to such as should venture to make them*.

It is themselves, my dear Isaac, the Courtiers have to blame for all this; they have made these Offices of true Friendship to their Sovereign so disgustful and dangerous. If they had all the same Way of Thinking with the *English*, they would never degrade themselves so far as to be afraid to use their Reason, or to look upon Truth as a dangerous and impracticable Virtue in a Court. By this means they would have preserved their Capacity of being useful to their Masters, instead of making them worse, as now too often they do, by flattering their greatest Faults as if they were shining Virtues.

The same good Sense, which keeps the *English* Courtiers and Nobility from being Slaves to their Prince, teaches them how to support their own Quality with Moderation. We rarely see the great Men here dressed in magnificent Robes, speaking in an elevated Tone, boasting of their high Birth, talking of their Vassals, their fine Horses, &c. They don't assume haughty and insolent Airs: You will not observe a Lord strutting about on his Tip-toes, shrugging up his Shoulders, and taking Snuff with an Air, adjusting the Ties of his Peruke, deciding Matters with a Magisterial Authority, smiling or humming while one talks to him, not deigning to vouchsafe an Answer, or replying

* Montaigne's Essays, Book III.

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plying in two Words at most. A Nobleman of this Character is rarely to be met with at *London*; and if there be any such, these fantastical Airs, which would set them off with Advantage in another Place, render them contemptible among the common People, and ridiculous among their Equals.

Ignorance is a Vice which finds few Partizans among Men of Quality in this Country. Instead of thinking it a Dishonour to apply themselves to the Study of the Sciences, they shew the utmost Contempt for such as reckon it below their Rank to know more than barely to read, and write a tolerable Hand. In many Countries, if a Man can but say a pleasant Thing with an Air, he passes for a fine Fellow; in *England* he would be look'd upon as a Blockhead, because here Things are esteem'd according to their real Worth. A Lord, who can only sing, dance, and compliment a Lady, is, in this Country, a Coxcomb. He who has these fine Phrases everlastingly in his Mouth, *A Man of my Quality, A Person of my Birth*, is only laugh'd at for his Pains. Could he claim all the Quality of *Venice*, it would procure him little Respect, unless he had something else to recommend him.

Nothing but Merit, in this Country, can make a Man esteem'd. Nobility and high Birth have Privileges, but these are merely honorary. A Lord, who can't distinguish himself by his Parts and Virtue, will find but Poor Entertainment from his Titles and Honours.

A *Swiss* Author introduces a certain Lord representing exactly the Insignificancy of all these Privileges, when separated from true Worth. *'Tis true, (says he) we cannot be arrested for Debt, but then few will give us Credit. Instead of swearing, we need only declare upon our Honour: But for this*

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Advantage we are seldom believed. There is a Law which makes it criminal to speak ill of us; but our Peerage will not secure us from being heartily dubb'd.*

This Author's Observations are not indeed very just, and therefore must not be literally understood. However, this may be learned from them, that, in *England*, even the Man of Quality must have Merit to make him considerable. This is the Reason why we see more learn'd Men among the Nobility of this Nation than any where else. Ambition, and the Desire of Glory, inspire them with very different Sentiments from what the same Passions excite in the Grandees of other Countries. A *French* Gentleman thinks he can derive sufficient Honour from his gilded Coaches, fine Horses, numerous Attendants, rich Furniture, and gay Clothes; but an *Englishman*, of the same Rank, looks upon all these Appendages as gaudy Trifles, and quite foreign to that personal Merit which only can raise a Man's Character.

There is, besides, another Reason, which, as it were, forces People of Distinction in this Country to cultivate the Sciences and *Belles Lettres*. They are under an absolute Necessity of understanding ancient and modern Policies and Laws; for here, all, who would aspire at any publick Post, are obliged to be well versed in History and Politics.

In England, (says a great Author) they all think, and Learning is even in greater Credit than in France. This Advantage is a natural Consequence of their Form of Government. There are, in London, near eight hundred Persons who have a Right to speak in publick, and to support the Interest of the Nation. There are near five or six Thousand who pretend to this Honour in their Turns. All the rest think them-

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selves

* *Muralt's Letters on the English Nation.*

selves capable to judge of these in Offices; and every one may print his Sentiments of publick Affairs. Thus the whole Nation is instructed in Politicks. One may commonly hear them talk of the Government of Athens and Rome: A Man is therefore forced, whether he will or not, to read those Books which treat of these Subjects, which naturally leads to the Study of the Belles Lettres. In general, Men are form'd according to the Genius of their respective Conditions of Life. How comes it that our Magistrates, our Advocates, our Physicians, and the Bulk of our Clergy, have generally more Learning, a better Taste, and a larger Share of Wit, than Men of other Professions? Why, it can be nothing else, but because their Way of Living obliges them to cultivate the Mind.*

Thou seest then, my dear Isaac, the true Cause of the Difference of Genius and Character between the *English* and *French* Courtiers. The latter need only Patience, blind Submission and Cunning, to qualify them for their Business; but the former must raise themselves by their superior Knowledge and assiduous Application; this will recommend, and give them the Preference of all Rivals.

Before I finish my Letter, I must take notice of one very remarkable Privilege of the *English* Nobility; none dare venture to libel or spread Invectives against them, under the Penalty of a very heavy Fine. This is determined by an express Law†. This Statute, I'm inform'd, gave Occasion to a pretty merry Adventure, which happen'd lately. The Son of a rich Inn-keeper being so lucky as to please a Lady of the first Quality, did not apprehend that this Law, which punishes want of Respect to the **Husband**, could prohibit an Excess of Regard for his **Wife**. Satisfied of this,

* Voltaire's Letters concerning the *English* Nation, Let: XX.

† Scandalum Magnatum.

the Gallant pushes the Intrigue, and was so lucky as to succeed in his Amour. The Peer, sensible of the Treachery of his Lady, sues for a Divorce; but not being able to bring such Proof as the Law requires in such Cases, the Judges cast the Inn-keeper's Son in the Damages specified in the above mentioned Statute. Since this Judgment, 'tis a settled Point, that a private Man fails in the Respect due to the Nobility, when he becomes too familiar with their Wives.

I know not, my dear *Isaac*, if this Precedent will deter many ~~amorous Sparks~~: I am told, that many still run the Hazard of suffering the same Punishment. If the Dukes and Marquesses in *Italy* had such a Law in their favour, not only to secure Respect for themselves, but also to guard the Chastity of their Wives, I make no doubt but they would be as tenacious of such a Privilege, as the *English* are of their Liberty.

Adieu, my dear *Isaac*. May the God of our Fathers bless thee with all manner of Prosperity.

London, *****.





LETTER CXXXVII.

AARON MONCECA to ISAAC ONIS.

I Have been lately reading, my dear *Isaac*, the Relation of a Prodigy inserted in a certain Journal *, and find it of such a Nature, that I believe you will concur with me, that the Facts contained in it are quite inaccountable by any known Principles of Philosophy, or by the utmost Force of human Reason. I give thee here a faithful Extract of the Story, and shall add my Remarks on the miraculous Part of it.

" We have had, in this Country, a new Scene
 " of *Vampirism*; the Story is attested by two Judges
 " of the Tribunal of *Belgrade*, who examined the
 " Matter upon the Spot, as also by an Officer of
 " the Emperor's Troops at *Gradisch*, who was an
 " Eye-witness of the whole Proceedings.

" In the Beginning of *September* died at *Kilsen*,
 " about three Leagues from *Gradisch*, an old Man
 " of Sixty-two Years: Three Days after his interment,
 " he appeared in the Night to his Son,
 " and asked for something to eat. The Son readily
 " gave him something, which he had no sooner
 " eaten than he disappeared. Next Day the Son
 " told his Neighbours what had happen'd. That
 " Night the Father did not trouble him; but the
 " Night after, he appeared and desired, as before,
 " some-

* *Mercurie historique & politique*, Octob. 1736. Pages 461.

" something to eat. It is uncertain whether the
 " Son gave him any thing or not; but, in the
 " Morning, the young Man was found dead in
 " his Bed. The very same Day five or six Per-
 " sons in the Village fell sick, and died, one after
 " another, within a few Days. The Magistrate,
 " or Bailiff of the Place, being inform'd of all
 " this, sends a particular Account of it to the
 " Tribunal of *Belgrade*; upon which two Offi-
 " cers, attended with an Executioner, were dis-
 " patched to the Village, with Instructions to ex-
 " amine strictly into the whole Affair. The Officer
 " in the Imperial Army (*to whom we are indebted*
 " *for the Relation*) repairs likewise to *Gradisch*, to
 " be Witness of the Examination of an Affair that
 " had made so great Noise. The first Thing done
 " was, to open all the Graves, though the Per-
 " sons had been dead six Weeks. When they came
 " to the Grave of the old Man, they found his
 " Eyes open, his Colour fresh, his Respiration na-
 " tural; and yet he was stiff and insensible, like
 " one dead. After Deliberation, the Commissio-
 " ners condemn'd him as a notorious *Vampire*.
 " The Executioner immediately drove a Stake
 " through his Heart, and then consum'd his Body
 " to Ashes."

Thanks to God none can charge us with Cre-
 dulity. We allow, that all the Light which Phy-
 sicks or Philosophy can afford, will not unriddle
 this Mystery: And yet, for all this, we can't re-
 fuse our Assent to a Fact, vouched by the Testi-
 mony of two Judges, besides other Witnesses of
 undoubted Credit; especially when we consider,
 that 'tis not the only Instance of that Kind. To
 the above Relation we shall add another not un-
 like it, taken from the *Glanceur*, N^o. 18. and which
 happen'd only in the Year 1732.

“ In one of the Cantons of *Hungary*, called
 “ *Oppida Heidonum*, on the other Side the *Tibiscus*,
 “ a River which washes the famed Territory of
 “ *Tokay* and *Transylvania*, the People known by
 “ the Name of *Heydukes*, believe that certain dead
 “ Persons, whom they call *Vampires*, suck the
 “ Blood of the Living so as to reduce them to
 “ mere Skeletons, while the Carcasses of those
 “ Leeches are so full of Blood, that it runs from
 “ all the Passages of their Bodies, and even from
 “ their very Pores.”

This strange Opinion is supported by a Number of Facts, of which there seems to be no Room left to doubt, if we consider the Character of those who attest them. We shall here give the Publick some of the most considerable.

‘ About five Years ago, a certain Heyduke,
 ‘ who dwelt in the Village of *Madreiga*, whose
 ‘ Name was *Arnold Paul*, was crushed to death by
 ‘ a Cart, loaden with Hay, that run over him. Thirty
 ‘ Days after, four Persons died suddenly, and in
 ‘ the very same Manner that those who are sucked
 ‘ by *Vampires* are commonly said to die. This
 ‘ brought to mind a Story that *Arnold Paul* had often
 ‘ told, how he was once tormented with a *Vampire*
 ‘ at *Cassova*, on the Frontiers of *Turkish Servia*,
 ‘ (Now, ’tis the vulgar Opinion, that the Living,
 ‘ who are sucked by a *Vampire*, turn *Vampires* themselves
 ‘ after they are dead) but that he had found a
 ‘ Way to cure himself, by eating some of the Dust
 ‘ out of the *Vampire*’s Grave, and anointing himself
 ‘ with his Blood. This Precaution, however, did
 ‘ not hinder his becoming a *Vampire* himself after
 ‘ his Death: For, when he was digg’d up, forty
 ‘ Days after his Interment, they found upon his
 ‘ Body all the Marks of an *Arch-Vampire*. His Body
 ‘ was of a fresh Colour; his Hair, Nails and
 ‘ Beard, were grown; his Veins were full of Blood,
 which

‘which issued from all Parts of his Body and stain’d
 ‘his Shroud. The *Hadnagy* or Bailiff of the Vil-
 ‘lage, who was a very competent Judge of the
 ‘Case, was present when he was taken up and ex-
 ‘amined, and, according to Custom, caused a sharp
 ‘Stake to be driven through the Heart of the dead
 ‘Body, upon which it is said to have given a lamen-
 ‘table Groan, as if it had been alive : After this
 ‘they struck off the Head, burnt the Body, and
 ‘threw the Ashes into the *Saarve*. The Bodies of
 ‘the four Persons who had died of *Vampirism* were
 ‘served in the same Manner, for fear they should
 ‘play the same Tricks in their Turns.

‘All this did not hinder the like melancholy
 ‘Prodigies to happen again towards the End of the
 ‘last Year, when several People of the same Vil-
 ‘lage died, in the same unhappy Circumstances.
 ‘Within the Space of three Months, seventeen Per-
 ‘sons, of different Ages and Sexes, died of *Vam-
 ‘pirism*; some of them suddenly, others after two or
 ‘three Days Illness. Among the rest was one *Sta-
 ‘noska*, the Daughter of *Jovitzo*, who, going to
 ‘Bed in perfect Health, about Midnight was seized
 ‘with an universal Trembling, and awaked with
 ‘nightful Shrieks, affirming, that the Son of an
 ‘*Heyduke*, called *Millo*, and who had been dead
 ‘nine Weeks, had attempted to strangle her in her
 ‘Sleep. From that very Moment she began to
 ‘languish, and in about three Days after died. This
 ‘occasioned a Suspicion, that *Millo’s* Son was a
 ‘*Vampire*. Upon digging up his Body, they found
 ‘him so indeed. The chief Inhabitants of the Place,
 ‘with the Physicians and Surgeons, fell to enquire
 ‘how *Vampirism* had again broke out, in spite of
 ‘all they had so lately done to prevent it. At last,
 ‘after a tedious Search, they found that *Arnold Paul*
 ‘had not only sucked the four Persons before taken
 ‘notice of, but likewise several Beasts, of which
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‘the new *Vampires*, and particularly the Son of *Millo*, had eaten. Upon this they resolve to take up the Bodies of all that had been buried within a certain Time. This accordingly they did, and, among forty dead Bodies, they found seventeen *Vampires*. Through the Hearts of all these they drove Stakes, cut off their Heads, burnt the Bodies, and threw their Ashes into the River.

‘All these Informations and Executions, we have mentioned, were taken and performed according to Law. The Facts are attested by several Officers of the neighbouring Garrisons, by the chief Surgeons of the Regiments, and principal Inhabitants of the Place where they happened. A Copy of the Process was sent to the Council of War at *Vienna*, who appointed a special Committee to enquire into all these Facts. One of these was attested by *Hadnagy Barriazar*, and several principal *Heydukes*. Another was signed by *Batteur*, first Lieutenant of Prince *Wirtemberg*’s Regiment; by *Flickstenger*, Surgeon-major of *Furstembusch*’s Regiment, besides several other Surgeons and Officers.’

Thus, my dear *Isaac*, I have communicated to thee all the odd Stories that I could pick up concerning *Vampires*, that thou may’st be able to judge more certainly of the Matter, by comparing the Circumstances of one Story with those of another. In the mean time, while I venture to give thee my Sentiments freely, I shall beg thine by the first Opportunity.

There are two Methods to confute this fond Opinion, concerning these extraordinary Visits from the other World, and to demonstrate the Impossibility of the strange Effects ascribed to a lifeless Carcass. The first is to explain, by natural Causes, the Prodigies commonly attributed to *Vampirism*. The second, (which certainly is the surest

surest and wisest Way) is, by denying absolutely the Truth of the Facts. But, as there are some who may think, that the Credit of those who attest the Narrative is sufficient to supply the Place of a Demonstration, even to the greatest Absurdity; before I shew the Weakness of this Argument, I shall, for once, admit, that many Persons have died of that Illness which the *Heydukes* call *Vampirism*.

I take it for granted, that 'tis possible to find fluid Blood in the Veins of a dead Body, even several Days after its Interment. I add further, that it is very easy for credulous People to fancy themselves sucked by *Vampires*, and, by the Force of this Imagination, to kill themselves. Having their Heads filled with frightful Stories all Day, 'tis no Wonder if these Phantoms haunt them in their Dreams at Night, and produce such a Terror as proves fatal, to some instantly, to others in a short Time. How many have suddenly dropp'd down dead for Fear? And has not excessive Joy sometimes produced the same dismal Effect?

In examining the Circumstances of the Death of these Victims to *Vampirism*, I plainly discover all the Symptoms of an epidemick Fanaticism, and am convinced, that the Impression which Fear had made on their Minds was the true Cause of their Destruction. Do but mark the Story of *Staniska*, *She goes to Bed well, awakes in the Middle of the Night, and cries out in a Fright, that one of her Acquaintances, lately dead, had attempted to strangle her in her Sleep: In this Condition she languished for a few Days, and then died.*

Now, is there any Man so blind as not to see, that the *Vampirism*, in this Case, is no more than a disturbed Imagination? Here is a timorous Girl crying out, that she was attack'd in her Sleep: However, 'tis not alledged that she was suck'd by
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the *Vampire*; her Shrieks spoiled that Night's Repast; and 'tis not at all likely the Blood-sucker could find Access to her afterwards, when doubtless People sat up with her. Notwithstanding she died in three Days: Her Languishing and Melancholy during that Time shew plainly, that she died of a disturbed Imagination.

Those who live in Places afflicted with the Plague know, by Experience, how many have lost their Lives through Fear. The Moment a timorous Person finds the least Disorder, he fancies himself seized with the contagious Distemper; and this fills him with such dreadful Apprehensions, that make it almost impossible for him to recover.

The Chevalier *de Maisin* assured me, at *Paris*, that he was once at *Marseilles* when the Plague raged there, and knew a Woman die with Fear, because her Maid was seized with a slight Illness, which she took for the Plague. The same Passion brought her Daughter to the Point of Death. Two other Persons in the same House took Bed, sent for a Physician, and told him they had the Plague. The Physician, upon visiting them, assured them it was not the Plague, endeavoured to quiet their Minds, and advised them to rise and live in their usual Way. But all was to no Purpose with respect to the Mistress of the House; for, within two Days, she died of mere Apprehension.

Let us, my dear *Isaac*, examine the first Story in the Journal, and we may collect, from the Circumstances, an undeniable Evidence of what dreadful Effects Fear and Prejudice can produce. *The old Man, three Days after his Interment, appears to his Son in the Night.—Next Day he tells the Story to his Neighbours. That Night he did not appear, but the Night following.—The Son is found dead in his Bed.*

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From these Circumstances, what can be plainer than that all was owing to Prejudice and Fright? The first Attack upon his Imagination served only to pave the Way, and render him more susceptible of the fatal Effects that his Pannick produced on its Return.

Mark here, the Father did not appear the Night immediately after the Son had told the Story to his Neighbours, for this good Reason, because his Friends would probably watch with him, and so keep up his Spirits.

I come now to account for the dead Bodies being found full of Blood, with their Beards, Nails, and Hair of their Heads grown. None can blame me for Want of Complaisance, if I admit the Truth of one fourth Part of these Prodigies, and charge all the rest to pure Imagination. Every body knows how apt People in general, and even Historians themselves, are to magnify whatever has the least Air of being supernatural: And, after all, it is not impossible to assign a natural Cause for most of these Circumstances.

By Experience we learn, that there are some Kinds of Earth that preserve dead Bodies fresh and uncorrupted for a long Time. The Reasons have been so often stated by Naturalists, that I shall save myself the Trouble to repeat them.

At *Thoulouse*, in a Church belonging to a Monastery, there is a Vault where Bodies are preserved for above two hundred Years, and at this Day appear as fresh as when they were first buried. They are placed on their Feet in a Row against the Wall, dressed in their usual Garments: One would almost think they were alive. But that which is most extraordinary here, Bodies buried in the other Side of the same Vault are consumed in two or three Days.

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As to the Growing of the Hair and Nails, there is nothing uncommon in it. These Parts of the Body are supplied by Moisture only, and therefore 'tis no Wonder to see them grow, so long as there remains any Moisture in the Body.

The Fluidity of the Blood seems the greatest Difficulty; and yet, even in this Case, there is no need to have Recourse to Miracles. The Heat of the Sun rarifies those Nitrous Particles in the Graves, so that they insinuate themselves into a Body newly buried; and having enter'd the Blood, cause a kind of Fermentation, which dissolves the *Coagulum*, and leaves the Veins full of liquid Blood. This Opinion is confirmed by an easy Experiment. If we boil, in a Crucible, one Part of Milk, with two of Oil of *Tartar*, the Liquor, though white at first, will become red; because the Salts of the *Tartar* dissolve and rarify the Oily Parts of the Milk, and so convert it into a Sort of Blood. 'Tis true, that Blood which is form'd in the Body is of a higher Colour, but almost of the same Consistence. It is not at all improbable then, that the Heat of the Sun, fermenting the nitrous Particles of the Earth with the Oily Juices of a dead Body, may produce such a red Liquor very much resembling Blood.

Thou seest, my dear *Isaac*, how this foolish Notion may be confuted, supposing the Facts undeniable. But this is granting far too much; for nothing can be so ridiculous as to suppose them possible. Either these *Vampires* go out of their Graves in quest of their Prey, or they do not. If they go out, they must be visible; but the contrary is true by Experience. It follows then, that the Body never goes out. Shall we fancy therefore that it is the Soul that does all this? But the Soul is spiritual, or at least something that very much resembles a Spirit: It must therefore have a proper

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Vessel to receive the Blood, and carry it to pour into the dead Body. Is not this an important Commission the Soul is sent upon? The Truth is, my dear *Isaac*, I blush to spend so much Time in exposing this whimsical Opinion about *Vampirism*. I am just in the Situation of a *Nazarene* Doctor, who tells us, *he was ashamed for those he consulted, and thought their maintaining such Absurdities was a Reproach to the human Nature* *. I observed before, how little Regard is due to Certificates, which are designed to establish the Credit of miraculous Events.

Adieu, dear *Isaac*. May Happiness and Contentment attend thee.

*London, *****.*

* *Sed jam pudet me ista resillere, dum eos non puduerit ista sentire, cum tunc aut ista defendere, non jam coram sed ipsius erroris humanum me pudet, cum us aures hac ferre potuerunt.* Aug. Epist. LVI.



LETTER CXXXVIII.

AARON MONCECA to ISAAC ONIS.

THERE are in *England*, my dear *Isaac*, as many different Sects as in *Holland*. The Inhabitants are too jealous of their Liberty to submit to an Uniformity in Religion; every one claims it as his Birthright, to think for himself. They bravely resolve to make use of their Reason in all their Actions, and scorn the mean Spirit that can slavishly digest the particular System of a few lordly Divines. But though every Man may chuse

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what Religion he believes to be the best, yet that of the *established Church* prevails generally throughout *England*. The King and prime Nobility profess themselves Members of this Church, and are zealously attach'd to it. The Profession is made a Qualification to possess any civil Office in *England* or *Ireland*. They give to this Religion the Name of *the Church*, importing, that it is the chief Religion of the State. The Non-conformists, however, will not allow them to monopolize this pompous Name. Nay, some of them will not stick to call them the *Sect* of the *Prelatists*. Tho' the *English Church* have embraced the Doctrines of *Calvin*, yet their Common Prayer and Form of Government are very opposite to the Institutions of that Divine: On the contrary, they come very near the Church of *Rome*, in spite of the Reformation, especially in their Cathedral Worship. The Bishops, in Number twenty-six, have under them Archdeacons, who exercise Jurisdiction over the Priests. All the Pastors, whether they be dignified or not, are very careful to exact of the People the very same Tithes and Revenues which the Popish Clergy, their Predecessors, enjoy'd before them. They very piously judged, that this Article needed no Reformation. A Protestant Bishop takes the same Seat in the House of Lords, that his Popish Brother once filled: But as the Canon Law prohibits their voting in Matters of Blood, when an Enemy of the Church is to die, all that these spiritual Judges can do, is to cabal and solicit Laymen against him.

In the Times when the *English* took it in their Heads to burn Protestants for the Glory of God, the Sentence of one single Bishop, declaring a Man to be an Heretick, sent him to the Stake. At present they have no such Power: Every Man, let his Religion be what it will, is safe from the Fa-

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got, though otherwise he may still be exposed to Clerical Persecution.

The Priests of different Sects hate one another heartily, and oft diffuse the malignant Humour thro' their Flocks. There have been some Protestant Bishops in this Country, who would willingly have paid down ten Years Revenue for Liberty to persecute the Non-conformists: These again, in their Turn, would be infinitely pleased utterly to abolish the Episcopal Pomp and Pride, which they cannot so much as look upon without Pain. Though, in Fundamentals, Churchmen and Presbyterians are perfectly agreed, yet they differ widely with respect to a Number of Ceremonies, or rather Childish Trifles. Their Disputes about these, some Years ago, were so hot as cost many a Man his Life. Through an Excess of Madness, even at the very Time when the Papists were plotting the Ruin of the whole Reformation, the Protestants contributed to facilitate their Design, by mutually destroying one another; and the Ground of this bloody Contest was little else than a bare Name: Some are called Churchmen, and some Presbyterians. Thou mayest, perhaps, be desirous, my dear Isaac, to know the Difference between these two Sects; and it so happens that I can satisfy thee with respect to the Principles of the Presbyterians, especially the *French* and *Walloon* Refugees.

As I was walking the other Day, with one of my Friends, before the *French* Church, he desired me to go in and hear the Sermon, which I readily did; for thou knowest I make no Scruple of going into the Churches of all Sects, that I may become acquainted with their different Forms and Manner of Worship. We had scarce taken our Seats, when the Preacher mounted the Pulpit, and began his Discourse with such a modest and serious Air as perfectly charm'd me. All of a sudden,

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den, I hear a surprising Noise in all Parts of the Church: The whole Audience appear'd to me just like the Convulsionaries in *Paris*; one coughs, another shakes his Head, and most of them put their Hands to their Hats. But what was most observable, five or six Persons, in a Gallery directly opposite to me, seem'd agitated to an excessive Degree. They spread out their Arms, and put themselves into the most ridiculous Postures. I was just going to ask my Friend what was the Matter, when, to my great Surprise, I see him making Faces like the rest. *Bless me*, said I, *what means all this Grimace?* *Let us go out*, said he, with an Air of Perturbation, *I can bear no longer, nor avoid testifying my Indignation for the Assent offered to our Church.* Upon this up he starts, and out he runs, and was followed by at least three Fourths of the Assembly. *Pray tell me*, said I, when we were got to the Street, *what is the Meaning of all this Bustle?* *Have you any thing in your Religion that resembles the ancient Bacchanalia of Rome?* *Have your Priests a Power of making their Hearers mad?* *That Preacher*, said he, *has violated one of our most sacred Rites; he had the Assurance to preach with his Hat off. And is this the great Crime?* replied I. *Did this affect his Doctrine?* *Do you think there is any Virtue in a Hat, to communicate brighter and juster Ideas, than 'tis possible to form with the Head uncovered?* I thought the whole Congregation had gone distracted; but now I understand the Meaning of your Motions. I heartily wish, answer'd my Friend, that we had not had so much Patience, but had ordered the Preacher to sit down and hold his Tongue. What will the World say, when they shall hear what has happen'd in our Church? Will they not think us Men of no fixed Principle, and that we are just upon the Point of conforming to the Establishment? This is the Effect

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of the foolish Complaisance of allowing strange Ministers to preach, who are unacquainted with the Rules of our Society.

I was much surprized to hear the Man talk in this Manner, and asked him, *Is this, my Friend, your grand Objection against the established Church, because they preach with their Hats off? Not only this,* replied he, *but also their Bowings, their Vestments, their Surplices, which I look upon to be the Dregs of unreform'd Popery. You must be very fond of Controversy,* said I, *who make so much ado about Trifles. It seems a Matter of no great Moment, whether a Man wear a long or a short, a white or a black Garment. Did your Lawgiver, or his Apostles, leave you any Patterns for Clothes? Did they descend so low, as to limit the Number of Yards that should go to making a Priest's Gown?*

My Railery was not at all agreeable to my Friend, who was a rigid Presbyterian. *I see,* says he, *you affect to justify the Church: But let me tell you, this is not very consistent with your own Principles; for the Jews are never uncovered in their Synagogues. That is true,* said I, *it is an ancient Custom, and universally observed by all the Israelites; even in Countries where they dress in Turbans, as among the Turks and Persians, we never uncover our Heads in our Places of Worship: But we look upon this Custom as no way essential to our Religion. You do well,* replied my Friend, *you are Masters of your own Actions, and so are we too. While there are French and Walloon Presbyterians, there will be, I trust in God, Men who will preach with the Hat on, and maintain their own Customs, in Defiance of all the Prelates upon Earth. Upon this my Friend left me abruptly, little satisfied with my Conversation.*

Thou needst not wonder, my dear Isaac, at the Rudeness of my Friend, or at his furious Zeal;

for the Presbyterians, in general, are excessively attach'd to their particular Modes of Worship. They are rigid, and lay aside all Pretence to Complaisance, when the least Alteration is attempted in their Way of Worship. Their Obstinacy increases in proportion to the Credit of those who oppose them. One might sooner persuade a *Janseist* to receive the Bull *Unigenitus*, than make a Presbyterian put on his Hat while the Psalms are sung, or put it off when they are only read. Are not these, my dear *Isaac*, ridiculous Whims? One must be mightily in Love with the Title of Non-conformity, who would purchase it by such an unreasonable Obstinacy.

Thou must not imagine, however, that the Churchmen here are in the least more reasonable, or less bigotted. If one of their Priests should appear in the Pulpit with his Hat on, it would make the whole Congregation mad. They would rather see all the Non-conformists in the World perish, than shew them so much brotherly Condescension as to lay aside their Surplice, or part with one superstitious Ceremony in their Worship. *You are a stiff-necked Crew*, say they to the Presbyterians, *who will not submit to Things which you yourselves can't but own to be indifferant.* And you are Persecutors, reply the Presbyterians, *who would tyrannically subject us to such Ceremonies of Man's Invention. They are indifferant; and for this very Reason you are inexcusable, when you alter their Nature, and impose them as necessary.*

The Dress and Air of the Presbyterian Divines is exactly suitable to their true Character. They walk with a demure and affected Gate. Their Faces are almost quite hidden under broad Brim'd Hats, and their Bodies are wrapp'd up in monstrous long Cloakes. A Presbyterian Parson, in the Streets of *Paris*, would be taken for some reverend

verend Divine, who had appealed to a general Council, and thereby at once had incurr'd the Displeasure of his Bishop, and brought himself into Disgrace at Court.

A Clergyman of the established Church makes a very different Figure. He is dressed in a fine Caslock, tied with a Taffety Surcingle: His upper Garment is a large and pompous Gown, artfully gathered on the Shoulders; his Head is equipp'd with a fine fair Wig, well powder'd, and a fashionable Beaver, with a twisted Hat-band and Rose. Set off in this Manner, he is not unlike the dignified Clergy in *France*, especially such of them as live in great Cities. Thus you may see the proud Priest strutting along with a disdainful Air, looking down upon his Inferiors as a Sett of puny Animals infinitely below his Notice. In his own Imagination, he is already advanced to the highest Preferment in the Church, and takes his Seat in the House of Lords. Glad he is to see the morose Presbyterian offended at his Grandeur. This very Thing secures him from so many Rivals of his Ambition. Instead of endeavouring to bring the Non-conformists into the Bosom of the Church by gentle Methods, he talks of nothing but penal Laws to force their Submission. In a Word, violent and haughty, because his Religion is established by Law, he would have every thing meanly truckle to his Reverence. To have a just Idea of this petulant Man, do but paint to thyself, dear *Isaac*, a bigotted *Jesuit*, who, to convert all the Protestants in the World, would not give up one single Lamp, that burns before the Image of his Patron *St Ignatius*.

I thought indeed, when I crossed the Seas, I had been quite rid of the Bickerings of the *Jansenists* and *Molinists*; but I find, in *England*, the Churchmen and Presbyterians copy them very exactly. If

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Miracles were as much in vogue here as in *France*, or in *Italy*, I should expect to hear many a good *English* Prelate canonized for the sole Merit of persecuting the Dissenters: And, on the other Hand, I question not but I should see many godly Dissenters cutting Capers at the Grave of some *St Paris* of their own Fraternity. The *English* rally the *French* for the religious Disputes which at this Day divide the Nation: And indeed they have Reason; for there cannot be a greater Sign of Weakness and Superstition in any People, than when they become Dupes of the Passion and Ambition of certain forward Ecclesiasticks, who, under Pretence of Orthodoxy, disturb Society, and engage the State in their private Quarrels with one another. But, after all, can the *English* boast that they are quite happy in this Respect? Are not the Church-Divines as ready to inflame their Zealots against their non-conforming Brethren? If they had it in their Power, would they not force the whole World to be of their Mind, even at the Expence of the half of the People in it? Are they not infinitely pleased with the great Share they have in the Government? and do they not often give it all the Disturbance they can? Upon the whole, we cannot find a more exact Copy of a *French Jesuit*, than an *English* High Church Divine; nor can there be two People in the World liker one another than the *Jansenist* and the Presbyterian. They are both equally obstinate in their Opinions; they join in running down those Dignities to which neither of them can ever arrive; they equally affect a stiff Air, preach through the Nose, wear a Sort of antique Dress, are profess'd Enemies to Pleasure, hate their Enemies bitterly, are excessively ambitious; and all these they cloake with a Shew of external Piety. So far the Resemblance is perfect.

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One must therefore conclude, that the *English* ought sparingly to reproach the *French* with the Troubles occasioned by the *Jansenists* and *Molinists*. It is easy for the *French* to recriminate. I readily admit, that the Extravagance of one Nation cannot justify the Extravagance of another, but it may, in some Measure, alleviate it. In every Kingdom where there are Clergy, there is Jealousy, Ambition, Pride, and consequently Disputes and Persecution. The People, ever easy to be practised upon, are prejudiced in favour of whatever Opinion first strikes them; they have neither Capacity to understand Controversy, nor Prudence to let it alone. 'Tis no Wonder then if they blindly follow such Guides as every one has chosen for himself. The same Thing may be alledged in favour of the Disputes between the Church and Dissenters at *London*, as in favour of the like Disputes between the *Molinists* and the *Jansenists* at *Paris*: And indeed every where the Case will be the same, be the different Opinions what they will. If there were none in the World but Philosophers and Divines, the latter would find but few silly enough to concern themselves in their religious Altercations.

Farewel, my dear *Isaac*. May Contentment and Happiness attend thee: And may the God of our Fathers deliver thee from the Plague of a disputing Spirit.

London, *****.



LETTER

World generally worshipped; nay, more, *Gassendi*, by his learn'd Differtations against *Aristotle*, paved the Way for the celebrated *Descartes*. This last may justly be reckoned the Restorer of true Philosophy, and the Scourge of the Peripateticks. Then it was that Men, who had been so long quite lost amidst vain Dreams and Chimeras, began, at once, to make use of their Reason, and to examine an Opinion before they embraced it. A Multitude of useful and surprizing Discoveries succeeded in room of a Number of fabulous Tales and gross Puerilities, that till then had prevailed. The Maxim, *that Nature abhorred a Vacuum*, was found to be ridiculous. Men are taught, that the Air is a ponderous Body; Telescopes are invented; Geometry is improved; and, by exercising their reasoning Faculty, Men learn how far it can go, and how safely they may follow it.

While these happy Revolutions in the *Republick of Letters*, are brought about in *France*, what is doing all the While in *England*? Why, nothing at all, or next to nothing. *Hobbes*, a Friend and great Admirer of *Gassendi*, was, at that Time, the only Philosopher in this Country: But how much inferior was he to *Gassendi* or *Descartes*? His Works *, though not without their Excellencies, will easily demonstrate the Superiority of the *French Philosophers*. In them we find no consistent System, establish'd by solid Reasons. In many Places he is obscure, in others quite unintelligible. Where he seems to make Matter the Original of all Things, he is even below *Spinosæ*. Where he would asserit God to be the Creator of the World, he comes not near *Descartes*. The Writings of this last open'd the Eyes of the *English Literati*. Having

* *Elementorum Philosophia Sectio prima de Corpore*. See also, *Prælectiones sex ad Professores Savilianos*. And another Book, intitled, *De Homine, sive Elementorum Philosophia, sectio secunda*.

Having seen their former Errors, immediately they make the best Use of the Light they had received, and perfect the Discoveries which others had only begun. They did that for Posterity which the *French* Philosophers had done for them, and made no other Improvement than these would have made, had they lived long enough, and enjoyed their Advantages.

I dare affirm, that it requires no less Strength of Genius to grope out the Way of Truth in the Midst of the Darkness of Error, than it does to pursue this Route, when one is fairly enter'd into it. I readily admit, that *Newton* is a greater Philosopher than *Descartes* or *Gassendi*; but had he lived at the same Time, and in the same Circumstances with them, perhaps he might not have gone the same Length they did. Consider, my dear *Isaac*, that the first Principles of the *Newtonian* Philosophy are the very same that *Gassendi* established upon the Ruins of *Peripateticism*. The Necessity of a *Vacuum*, which had been exploded for above twelve hundred Years, was first demonstrated by this *French* Author. It is upon this Hypothesis of a *Vacuum*, that *Newton* founds the principal Arguments whereby he proves the Impossibility of *Descartes's* Notion of *Vortices*. If therefore he has routed the *Cartesians*, it must be own'd, he did it by Arms borrow'd chiefly from *Gassendi*.

I believe therefore, my dear *Isaac*, that a little Reflection will satisfy any one, that the *English* have no Right to that Superiority of Genius over all other Nations, which they arrogantly claim. It can't be denied but they are indeed the greatest Philosophers in the World: But for this, we see they are indebted to the *French*; and 'tis not impossible that this Nation, in its Turn, may hereafter improve the *English* Philosophy, and produce

some great Man, who will even exceed the famous *Newton*. As to those who would confute this Claim of the *English*, by denying the Preheminence of their Philosophers, they must be blinded either by Prejudice or Ignorance. The most superficial Comparifon of the *English* Sages with thofe to whom they are opposed, will clear up their Miftake.

Descartes destroy'd the Chimeras of the Schoolmen, he pointed out the Errors of the Ancients, and thereby put Mankind in the Way to discover his own. He made great Progreff in Geometry; and to him we owe the Doctrine of Curves in Algebra. He almost perfected Dioptricks, which, in his Hands, became, in a manner, a new Science. In this Branch of Learning he discovered, to Advantage, that Geometrical Turn, and quick Invention, which Nature had bellow'd upon him, and which a long and assiduous Application had very much improved. Behold the vast Talents of this great Man! But observe likewise his Defects. He was mistaken in his Notions concerning the human Soul. His Arguments for the Existence of a God are not always conclusive. His Affertion of innate Ideas, which he obitainately maintained, has not the least Shadow of Truth. He advanced feveral Miftakes about the Laws of Motion, and the Nature of Light. He went further, and even adopted thofe very Trifles and Quibbles, with which he upbraids the Schoolmen. He uses the Term *indefinite* in fuch a Sense, as to assert that Matter and Space are neither finite nor infinite. In fhort, he would make us believe, that he thought God could change the Nature of Things.

Newton has found his Account not only in the Learning of *Descartes*, but even in his very Defects. He has carried Geometry as far beyond the Point

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Point where *Descartes* left it, as the latter had carried it beyond those who went before him. In this Respect, we must allow an equal Share of Merit to each of our Philosophers: But, at the same Time, we can't deny that *Newton* is a much greater Geometrician than *Descartes*; nay, in all other Branches of Philosophy, he has plainly the same Advantage. One may say, that *Newton*, after he had discovered a new World, has been able to unravel the most intricate Secrets in it. He has laid open the Errors of *Descartes* on the Nature of Light; and, which is more, has introduced in their Stead, certain Principles, demonstrated by plain Experiments. He has utterly demolished the *Frenchman's Vortices*, and substituted in their Room *Attraction*; the Effects of which he has demonstrated, and calculated its Proportion. It is to this Philosopher, the World owes the vast Knowledge, to which former Ages were utter Strangers. All the learned Sages listen with Amazement, whilst the great *Newton* teaches them, that Centripetal Force is the only Cause that Bodies weigh in proportion to their Quantity of Matter; and, that to the same Cause we must ascribe the Motion of Planets and Comets. Indeed, if it could be supposed, that ever there shall be a Man without his Equal, I should be tempted to believe it was this Philosopher, who has so clearly explained all the Laws of Nature. At least, we may affirm, that, if any one shall hereafter arise capable to rival this Prodigy of Learning, all our modern Philosophers will be Fools in comparison of him.

Several very learned Men, especially of the *Cartesian* Sect, stick not to compare *Mallebranche* with *Locke*; but there is as great a Difference between these two Philosophers, as between *Descartes* and *Newton*. *Mallebranche*, in his lofty and strained Metaphors, appears more like a Poet than

^a Philosopher: He took his Aim too high, and instead of reaching Heaven, was obliged to stop when he had got but Half-way. In this Situation he scarce discovers a Glimpse of Heaven, while he quite lost Sight of this Earth. He admits innate Ideas, and maintains the ridiculous Notion, that we see all Things in God. He thinks it impossible to demonstrate the Existence of Bodies. In short, his System of Philosophy is nothing but an ingenious Romance, which, in many Places, is very obscure.

The learned *Locke* has laid down true Principles, and drawn from them just Consequences: He is exact in his Proofs, and has revealed the deepest Secrets of the human Understanding. He has taught the Learned not to determine positively about Things which they don't understand. Before his Time, Philosophers had delivered their own Dreams, on the Nature of the Soul, for Truths; but he has banish'd all these Chimeras, destroyed the Doctrine of innate Ideas, and demonstrated that all our Ideas are derived from our Senses. Having, as it were, anatomized human Reason, and laid open all the Knowledge, concerning the Essence of the Soul, that Mortals can ever hope to attain; with the same Candour and Evidence he proves, that we are not capable to comprehend the Nature of a *Spirit*, or to know certainly whether God may not endue Matter with a Faculty of Thinking*?

Now, my dear *Isaac*, are not these Sentiments more just, more natural, and less perplexed, than those of *Mallebranche*? Do but compare the Candour and Ingenuity of the *English* Metaphysician with the Presumption and Arrogance of this *Frenchman*; he not only limits the Power of the All-mighty

* Vide *Essay on Human Understanding*, Book IV. Chap. III. Page 445.

mighty, with respect to the Souls of Men, but adopts a System as ridiculous, as untenable, in regard to the Souls of Brutes. These he describes to be mere Machines, or Pieces of Clock-work, *eating without Pleasure, crying without Pain, desiring nothing, fearing nothing.* Sure *Mallebranche* must have had a large Stock of Vanity, if he thought his Authority was sufficient to palm such Absurdities upon the World. I know very well he only followed *Descartes*, who invented them; but he is nevertheless culpable for all that, because he ought to have examined and rejected them. But how came he to fancy that Matter was capable of Thought, while he admitted the Existence of Bodies only out of Complaisance, and seemed angry with his Master for not denying it absolutely? *In order to be fully satisfied,* says he, *that there are Bodies, it must be demonstrated, not only that there is a God, and that he cannot deceive us; but also that God has actually created them: A Thing which I don't find proved in any of Descartes's Works. There are only two Ways in which God speaks to the Understanding, and demands our Assent; by Reason, and by Faith. I acknowledge, that Faith obliges us to believe that there are Bodies; but for Reason, it seems to be quite excluded from the Case*.*

Dost thou think, dear *Isaac*, that *Locke* would ever have attempted to prove, that nothing exists but God and our Souls? No sure, he was too wise to harbour such idle Fictions.

Farewel, my dear *Isaac*: Live content and happy; and never give thyself up to believe any Philosophy, but what is founded on Reason.

London, *****.

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LETTER

* *Techoule de la verite, Eclaircissement sur Livre I. Pag. 499.*



LETTER CXL.

AARON MONCECA to ISAAC ONIS.

IN my last, dear *Isaac*, I gave thee some Account of the *Engliss* Philosophers. In this, I shall continue the Account of other learned Men of that Country. Thou hast seen the Works of the famous Chancellor *Bacon*. He was a kind of Harbinger to *Descartes* and *Gassendi*. He was sent, as it were, to tell the World, that the End of Scholastick Impertinences was at hand. He was sensible of the Imperfection of that Philosophy, and was the first who put Men in the Way to remedy it. He proves, to a Demonstration, that the *Aristotelian* Philosophy was no way preferable to other ancient Systems: He shews that it had been long despised among the *Greeks*, and other Pagan Nations; and that it was only in the Times of gross Ignorance, and when the Sciences were totally neglected, that this Philosophy found Admirers*.

A Protestant, and Friend of mine, observed to me, the other Day, that *Savonarola* prepared the Way for *Luther* and *Calvin*, and other Reformers of Religion; and that *Bacon* did the same to our modern Reformers of Philosophy. He added further, that Fortune seems to have taken a singular Plea-

* Vide *Bacon. novum Organum scientiar*, Lib. I. Cap. lxxvii. Pag. 292.

Pleasure in distressing these Harbingers of the Reformation. *Savonarola*, says he, was hang'd; and *Bacon*, by Sentence of the House of Lords, was fined, and lost his Office of Chancellor. The *English* set a great Value upon the Moral Essays of this Author. Indeed 'tis no more than they deserve, for they are extremely good; tho' they are far short, in Point of Delicacy and Elegance, of the Essays of *Michael de Montaigne*. The *French* Scepticks excel the Writers of that sort among the *English*, as far as the *English Literati* commonly surpass the *French*, in Metaphysics and natural Philosophy. No Author, in this Country, is comparable to *Montaigne*, much less to *Bayle*. I very much question, whether there ever was, in any Country, a Writer of such vast Learning as the latter: He had a peculiar and inimitable Talent of treating the most abstruse Subjects, in such a Manner, as to make them agreeable to the Vulgar, to Men of Taste, and even to the Ladies themselves.

Thou art sensible, my dear *Isaac*, that the *English* have not one Historian equal to *Titus Livius*, to *Tacitus*, to *Salust*, to *Father Paul*, to *de Thou*, or even to *Father Daniel*. An astonishing Thing it is, that a Party-Spirit should prevail more here than among the very *Jesuites* themselves. *Burnet*, a modern Historian, formed a Design to imitate *de Thou*, but, we find, he was unable for the Task; for he comes not near his Original, either in Method, Exactness, or Purity of Stile. To say nothing of the Partiality with which almost all Parties charge him. They tell us, that, in the whole first Part of his History, there are but five or six Gentlemen to whom he has given good Characters; and that he himself makes one of the Number. Tho' 'tis possible this Criticism may be without Foundation, the Defect may not proceed so much

much from the Malignity of the Historian, as from the Badness of the Times, and the Want of a proper Subject for Panegyrick. Indeed, this must be said in his Favour, that, in all the *English* History, it will be difficult to pick out any two Reigns so corrupt and tyrannical, as those who are the Subject of this Part of the Bishop's History. However, we must allow, that a Whig can never keep himself within Bounds, when he writes of a Tory Government; nor, on the other hand, are the Tories a whit less partial in representing the Whigs.

The Authority of an *English* Historian is pretty much the same as that of the *French* Writers under *Charles IX.* and *Henry III.* It would be extremely hard to find, in this Country, a Man capable of writing an impartial History, such as Posterity may safely depend upon; and two Reasons may be assign'd for this: The first is the Prevalence of Party-Spirit, which makes the one Half of the Nation sworn Enemies to the other. The second is the Presumption and Self-conceit, which is natural to all the *English*. This will not permit them to allow Foreigners any Advantages, which may seem in the least to diminish their own Glory. If they scruple not to disguise and falsify Facts which happen even among themselves, it is not to be wondered at, if they misrepresent Affairs which are transacted abroad, when they don't suit their Humour.

If the *English* have few good Historians, the Loss is sufficiently made up by their excellent Poets. Thou'rt acquainted, my dear *Isaac*, with *Milton's Paradise lost*. This Poem has not all the Beauties of the *Aeneid*, but, I confess, I think it preferable to *Tasso's Gierusalemme liberata*. The *English* Poet knew better than the *Italian*, to improve the Advantages of Religion. I don't believe we can find, either in *Virgil* or *Homer*, any thing more sublime than
that

that Passage in *Milton*, where the Deity is represented going out to make War upon the rebellious Angels: *The Almighty*, says he, *took his Arms from Terror*. There is something exceeding lofty and grand in this Idea, when the Poet dares be so bold as bring the supreme Being, like a valiant Hero, into the Field, he can scarce assign a more proper Squire than *Terror* to attend him.

Waller is a Poet as far above *Voiture*, as he is below *Catullus*. His Works are polite, and full of Beauties, but sometimes low and without Spirit. They may justly be reckoned to hold the middle Rank between the sparkling Wit of *Fontaine* and the Bombast of *Guarini*. *Waller* has neither all the Merit of the one, nor all the Defects of the other.

Pope is, beyond Contradiction, one of the greatest Poets in the World. We may, indeed, we ought, to esteem him as worthy to rival *Boileau*, *Cornille*, or *Racine*; nay, even *Virgil* or *Homer*. This last is perhaps more perfect in the *English* Translation, than in the *Greek* Original. I know nothing in Poetry more ingenious, more arch, or full of Humour, than *the Rape of the Lock*. The *Lutrin* of *Boileau*, has something in it stronger and more manly, but is not nearly so entertaining. They assure me, in this Country, that *Pope* was not above twenty Years of Age, when he made that charming Poem.

The lofty Description of the Employment of deceased Heroes in the *Elysian* Fields, by *Virgil*, is by no means superior to the beautiful Picture which *Pope* has drawn of the Amusements of the Ladies after Death. He introduces one of the *Sylphs* speaking thus:

*Think not, when Woman's transient Breath is fled,
That all her Vanities at once are dead:*

Suc-

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*Succeeding Vanities she still regards,
 And tho' she plays no more, o'erlooks the Cards.
 Her Joy in gilded Chariots, when alive,
 And Love of Ombre after Death survive.
 For when the Fair in all their Pride expire,
 To their first Elements the Soul retire:
 The Sp'rits of Fiery Termagants in Flame,
 Mount up, and take a Salamander's Name.
 Soft yielding Minds to Water glide away,
 And sip with Nymphs their Elemental Tea.
 The graver Prude sinks downward to a Gnome.
 In Search of Mischief still on Earth to roam.
 The light Coquettes in Sylphs aloft repair,
 And sport and flutter in the Fields of Air *.*

Read this, my dear *Isaac*, and confess, that the pretty Conceits of our Cabalists could not possibly be better applied than they are by *Pope*, in order to form a just and elegant Satire on the Fair Sex. All the different Characters of Women are exactly delineated, in this Description of their Entertainments after Death; and, by a Dexterity peculiar to great Masters, the Poet, tho' he supposes them dead, paints them so to the Life, that every Stroke of his Pencil produces a new and perfect Picture.

The Earl of *Rochester* hath written several Satires, in a Style as nervous and strong as that of *Boileau*. He had a very bright and lively Imagination. He lived like *Petronius*, and died like *Fontaine*. Throughout his Life, he was vain of being accounted a Free-thinker; but, some Time before his Death, he alter'd his Sentiments entirely. The Terror of Death, and Dread of its Consequences, alarm'd him. In his last Moments he had Recourse to a certain Divine: However, in order to save his Reputation as a Philosopher, he

desired

* *The Rape of the Lock,*

desired to capitulate before he surrender'd. After a few Conferences on this Head with the Doctor, he yielded and sign'd the Articles of Pacification. Nothing could prevail to save his beloved Philosophy; it must be sacrificed without Mercy. He recanted all his Errors; and a little after his Death, Dr. *Burnet* published a Tract of his extraordinary Conversion.

It is an ordinary Custom with Atheists, while they are in Health, to deny the Being of God; at least, they endeavour to banish the Belief of him from their Thoughts, that they may, with less Remorse, indulge themselves in all manner of Vice: But they no sooner come to leave the World, than immediately all their false Philosophy vanishes; they throw themselves into the Arms of their Ghostly Fathers, and become then, as submissive as before they were incredulous. There is scarce any thing but what one may make them believe in their last Hours. They swallow blindly whatever is said to them, and resume those Prejudices of which they fancied themselves for ever cured. For Proof of this, I appeal to the Weakness of several Creatures of this Sort, who, when dying, have ordered themselves to be clothed in the Habit of a Monk, and given Directions that they should be buried in that ridiculous Dress.

It is not Reason, it is Fear and Terror, that produces such a Change in a Man, when just upon the Verge of Life. To be satisfied of this, we need only consider, that those who are thus converted on a Deathbed, never fail to die in that Religion in which they were born. If Conviction directed their Choice, it would sometimes at least happen as to those who examine the Difference of Religions in their Health, and frequently reject the Faith in which they had been educated. We can scarce enough despise that Man, who, all his Life,

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Life, refuses to receive the most evident Truths, and yet, at his Death, will become a Slave to the most ridiculous Prejudices.

Besides the Poets, of whom we have been speaking, there are, in this Country, many others who merit the Esteem of the learned World. The *English* are not without Dramatick Authors; I shall very speedily give you my Sentiments of their Stage.

It is by no means surprizing, that Poetry hath been carried to such a Height in this Nation. Several Persons of the first Quality have not been ashamed to become Votaries of the Muses. My Lord *Roscommon*, the Duke of *Buckingham*, the Earl of *Dorset*, and many others of high Birth, have favoured the Publick with Pieces not inferior to the Performances of first Rate Poets. Such noble Examples have excited the Emulation of the lower Sort: Every body naturally imitates Men of Figure; and it is the singular Happiness of the *English*, always to have among their Nobility, Men of distinguished Merit, and passionately fond of Learning. To become fashionable here, 'tis not necessary, as in some other Countries, to mimick certain ridiculous Grimaces, or to affect a contemptuous Sneer at the Sciences, or to treat all Men of Learning as Pedants. Such a Behaviour, in *England*, would make a Man appear very ridiculous,

Before I finish my Letter, I must observe one of these happy *Phenomina*, one of these Wonders, which Nature produces, perhaps once in twenty Ages. This *Phenominon*, which bears so favourable an Aspect to *England*, and the Sciences, is the present *Queen Consort* *. This illustrious Princess is not only above the Weakness of her Sex, but also unblemished by the Defects which often attend

* The late Queen *Caroline*.

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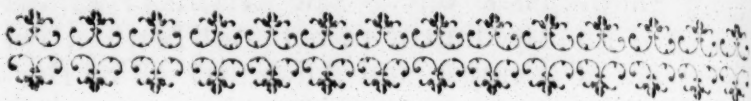
attend the greatest of Men. She is an *Heroine*, but a Philosophick one. The Grandeur of her Station is no Impediment to her good Nature, her Sweetness of Temper and Affability. The Burden of a Crown doth not hinder her to protect and cultivate the Sciences. Her Liberality extends to all the Neccessitous, but especially to Men of Learning under Misfortunes.

It will surprize thee, my dear *Isaac*, that so many Virtues and good Qualities should center in the same Person. Believe me, however, that all my Encomiums are infinitely short of that Princess's Merit. Thou knowest that the Lustre of a Throne is not apt to dazzle me. My Philosophical Eyes can distinguish Truth through all the Splendour of a Court; and when I can't declare it with Safety, I take Care to say nothing. I leave to Dedication-Writers the fulsome Task of flattering the Great. The Poet, if he will, may take the same Indulgence. Indeed the *Muses* have so long prostituted their Praises, that they may now claim a Right by Prescription. How many Tyrants! how many Simpletons! how many illustrious Villains! have they exalted to the Skies? But let never a Philosopher disgrace his Character, by violating Truth, or by offering Incense to an insignificant Idol.

Take Care of thy Health, my dear *Isaac*; live content and happy, and let me hear from thee.

*London, *****.*





LETTER CXLI.

AARON MONCECA to ISAAC ONIS.

THE *English*, my dear *Isaac*, have several Customs, which, in my Opinion, are as fantastical as any that are observed among other Nations. I was lately invited to the Funeral of a certain Burgefs of this City, where I found it quite impossible for me to comprehend the Ceremonies of that Office. To me they appear'd not a whit more reasonable than those I had observ'd at *Paris* on a like Occasion.

In this Country, the Breath is no sooner out, than they fall a stripping the Body of every thing made of Linen. A *Mahometan* is not more careful in washing a dead Body, a *Jew* is not more exact in purifying, or a *Papist* in muttering over it some superstitious Prayers, than the *English* are in wrapping it up in a Flannel Shroud. There are great Numbers of these Grave Cloths always ready made, and many get their Living by selling them. There is an exprefs Law, prohibiting the Use of any thing about a dead Body that is not Woollen. If so much as Thread of Flax, or Hemp, is employ'd in sowing a Shroud, 'tis a Crime against the State. However, at first, I was exceedingly surpris'd at this odd Custom, when I came to understand the Reason, I was far from condemning the *English*. The Intention of their Law, which forbids burying in Linen, is to increase the Consumption of Woollen

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Woollen Goods, and so to encourage that Kind of Manufacture. Nothing sure can shew a greater Concern for Trade, than to make the very Dead interest themselves in it. This is an Improvement with a witness. Indeed, if all their Funeral Rites were as rational, I should as readily approve of them; but there are many of 'em that they themselves cannot account for: They freely acknowledge, that they can scarce imagine any End they can possibly answer.

When the dead Man is well equipp'd in his Woollen Robes, which are coarser or finer in proportion to his Rank, (for the *Nazarenes*, thou must know, carry their Pride with them to the Grave) he must lie two or three Days in the Middle of his Apartment, in case he may take it in his Head to come to Life again. I can assign no other Reason why they should watch a dead Body for two or three Weeks, till it is half putrified, but this whimsical Notion. If this be the true Reason of the Custom, I am pretty sure it has been introduced at first by Fathers, without the Consent of their Children and Heirs. Many of these would think themselves miserably baulk'd, should their rich Friends embrace the Opportunity, and return from the other World to take Possession of their Estates again.

But notwithstanding all this seeming Care not to bury any till they are sure they are dead, I find them generally less affected with the Death of Relations here, than in any other Country. After the Deceased has shew'd himself obstinately resolved not to come to Life, he is nail'd up in his Coffin, and carried to his Place of Interment, under a large Black Pall border'd with White. This gloomy Canopy is so wide, that six Men bear the Extremities of it without exposing any Part of the Coffin to View. The Reformed *Nazarenes* alledge,

that all this is done out of Respect to the Dead, I should have easily guessed that this was the Reason of the Ceremony, for I observe that all the *Europeans*, except the *Turks*, take a singular Pride in having Pieces of Silk, or other Stuff, supported by their Servants at all publick Ceremonies. Kings have their Pages; a Counsellor of Parliament at *Paris* has his Train-bearer: The same Honour is done to a Bishop in his Procession; but above all the Ladies are jealous of this Honour which resides in their Tails. There is not one of any Note among them, but expects to have it borne up after her. Is not this, my dear *Isaac*, a pretty comical Mark of Glory. But to return to our Subject.

The Coffin thus covered with its Mourning Veil, is preceded by a certain Number of gloomy Fellows, who look like so many Serjeants, each carrying a long black Pole, tipp'd with Silver. Next, march the Parsons with an affected and solemn Air. The Parents, or near Relations, close the Procession, and make a dismal Figure, in proportion to their real Sorrow for the Deceased. In this Manner the Corpse comes to the Church, where it is set down till the Funeral Sermon be preach'd. This, for the most part, is a fullsome Panegyrick on the Deceased. Here they pay certain Fees to the Parson, and something for the Use of the Pall. Each Parish has three of different Prices.

The *English* Clergy, tho' they have extinguish'd the Fire of *Romish* Purgatory, retain, notwithstanding, many Funeral Ceremonies, of which they make a very gainful Market. They have changed the Popish Prayers for the Dead, into a few harmless Compliments to their Memory. In this Respect, I can't but remark their Candour and Sincerity. They can't think of receiving the Dues and Rents of *Romish* Priests, without returning some of their
Spiritual

Spiritual Toys, by way of Barter, for the Money they exact.

After the Corpse is buried, the People who assisted return in the same Order to the House. There they are entertain'd with *Spanish* and Claret Wine, sometimes stov'd with Spices, together with Plenty of other good Liquors. Every one takes so much as he thinks sufficient to support his Spirits, and drown his Sorrow. Even the Women, on such melancholy Occasions, scruple not to comply with so reasonable a Custom, and take their Glass very freely.

I find these Ceremonies of the *English* Protestants just as ridiculous as those of the Papists, though, I must own, they have something more gay and chearful. Instead of long and doleful Psalmodies, they content themselves with a short Funeral Sermon; and in room of the Popish Holy Water, wherewith they sprinkle the Dead, the wiser Churchmen have brought in a Glass of generous Wine to chear the Living. We may compare a Popish Burial to the dismal Ceremonies of a Magician, when he's calling up the Ghost of some dead Man; whereas an *English* Funeral differs little from a modish Entertainment. Compliments and good Chear are united here. Of the two Sorts of Folly I shall always prefer the gay and humourfome, to the sad and melancholy.

Persons of Quality in this Country, are buried in the same Manner as at *Paris*. They are carried in a Hearse, attended with a Number of Coaches full of Mourners and Friends. Thus they are conducted to Church, and interr'd in the Vaults, or Burying Places, of their respective Families.

I confess, my dear *Isaac*, that I am astonished when I observe the Ceremonies of the *English* Church, and yet hear them exclaim bitterly against the like Fooleries in the Church of *Rome*. They

little imagine that all these Reproaches rebound upon themselves. I admit, that the Presbyterians are pretty safe from Censure, in this Respect. Their Ceremonies are few and simple, and consequently less shocking to the Eyes of a Philosopher.

Suppose, for Instance, I was a *Nazarene* Papist. I'll undertake to prove (might I say to a Churchman) not only that you have Usages no less inaccountable than ours, but also that the very Thing wherewith you most reproach us, and which, in Reality, never happen'd amongst us, has fallen out many times amongst yourselves. How often have your Divines and Historians employ'd their Rhetorick against our Pope *Joan*? nay, even your Poets have made themselves merry with that Fiction. How happy, say you, was the Church, when thus govern'd by a Female Bishop? Was not this a rare Successor of *St Peter*? What did the Apostle think, when he looked down from Heaven, and saw his infallible Chair fill'd with a buxom Lass? Was it not a pleasant Sight to observe her Holiness formally brought to bed of a little Popling, in a publick Place?

This Railery, however, affects the Church of *England* more than that of *Rome*. This is a Point I am going to prove. 'If you suppose, with Men of Learning and Candour of your own Party, that the whole Story is a Forgery, you must consequently own the whole Charge brought against us to be mere Calumny: Nay, you must further allow me to urge, that this is a plain Proof of your Partiality and Readiness to accuse us of Things whereof we were never guilty. But if you choose the other Side, and obstinately maintain this Tale of a Female Pope to have been real Fact; upon this Supposition I will make it appear, on your own Principles, that this can't
' possibly

' possibly reflect Dishonour upon our Church, since
 ' that which happen'd but once amongst us, has,
 ' without Dispute, often been your own Case. Is
 ' it not universally granted, that the Sovereign is
 ' the Head of the Church in *England*? What do
 ' you think then of your Female Popes *Elizabeth*
 ' and *Anne*? You cannot therefore deny that all
 ' your Pleasantries may be turned against your-
 ' selves. Did not the Marshal *de Biron* boast that
 ' he had seen the Head of the Church of *England*
 ' dance? I know your Historians strenuously de-
 ' ny the Fact, and say, that your Queen *Elisabeth*
 ' did no more than play on a Harpsicord. But,
 ' be that as it will, you must admit she might have
 ' danced, had she so pleased; nay more, she might
 ' have imitated her Sister Pope, in every Particu-
 ' lar, had she not been endow'd with a little more
 ' Discretion. Now let me ask, Would you think
 ' the worse of your Church had this really hap-
 ' pened? You will, no doubt, answer, that the
 ' Faults of a particular Person can by no means
 ' affect any Religion. This is the very Argu-
 ' ment I advance, and I hope you will allow it
 ' equally strong on my Side, as on your own:
 ' You can make no Reply but what will make
 ' against yourselves. Perhaps you will alledge,
 ' that your Queen's being the Head of your Church
 ' is a Thing purely accidental; that it is only a
 ' honorary Title; and that none of them ever
 ' meddled with the Priestly Office. All this I ab-
 ' solutely deny, for they have a direct Authority
 ' over the Clergy; and if at any Time they have
 ' not used the Power which their Title gave them,
 ' it was merely because they were willing to dis-
 ' pense with the Exercise of their Right. Indeed
 ' there was one among your Queens, who not
 ' only believed she had Authority to establish Ce-
 ' remonies

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‘remonies in the Church, but also to perform the most sublime Mysteries of Popery.

‘When the Provinces of *Zealand* and *Holland* offered, by their Embassadors, to acknowledge Queen *Elizabeth* for their Sovereign, she rejected the Proposal, and endeavour’d to persuade them that they did wrong to revolt for such a Trifle as the Mass. *If you will not*, said she to the Embassadors, *assist at Mass, as a religious Ceremony, go to it as you would go to a Play. Suppose I took it in my Head to act this Scene, and say Mass before you, would you run away? I know you would not, but quietly look on. You see I am not ill prepared for the Office; I am clothed in a white Robe, and that is the main Thing in the Business.*

‘Do you think that a Queen, who was so well versed in the Ceremonial of a foreign Church, as to perform it on Occasion, could be unacquainted with the Rites of that Church of which she was the Head? Can we imagine that she, who made so bold with the Offices of another Church, could be at all diffident of her Right to perform those of her own? For my Part, I am of Opinion, that, if Queen *Elizabeth* had taken a Fancy to preach, none of her Subjects had a Right to censure her Doctrine.’ Thus would I reason with an *English* Churchman.

Observe, my dear *Isaac*, how different Sects attack one another on the weak Side, and one charges his Adversary with the very same Fault which he is guilty of himself. The Presbyterians indeed may, with some Grace, throw Pope *Joan* into the Dish of the Papists, because they are secure from a Recrimination. The established Church in *England* seems to be the *Mean* between the Church of *Rome* and that of *Geneva*: She has not so many Ceremonies as the former, nor has she the Simpli-

city

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city of the latter ; she seems afraid of doing too much on the one Hand, and of doing too little on the other.

Adieu, my dear *Isaac*. Live content and happy.

*London, *****.*



L E T T E R CXLII.

AARON MONCECA to ISAAC ONIS.

A Very melancholy Scene, my dear *Isaac*, of which I was a Spectator a few Days ago, gave Occasion to some serious Reflections on the Power of Prejudice. One would be astonished to imagine what Lengths this Prepossession, and a false Love of Glory will sometimes carry Men.

One of my Friends proposed my going to a Show, which he said would be very entertaining. I asked him seriously, if there was any thing curious in it? *Nothing*, said he, *can be more diverting ; you'll see the finest Rope-dancers in the World.* The grave Air of my Friend persuaded me, that he was in earnest, and therefore I came into his Proposal. He carried me two or three hundred Paces without *London*, along a great Road where was an infinite Number of Spectators thronging together. But judge, my dear *Isaac*, how great was my Surprise, when coming up to the Place, I saw a Gibbet, on which they were instantly to hang

hang upwards of a Score of Highwaymen and Thieves. *How now!* (said I to my Friend) *is this the charming Shew you promis'd me? Have but Patience,* (replied he) *the Play will presently begin. They only wait for the Actors, who are just upon the Road, driving full Speed.* That very Moment I heard a prodigious Noise, and, turning about, saw a Cart full of People, several of whom were exceedingly well dress'd. *Ay! ay!* (says my Friend) *by the very Looks of these Sparks, I guess that the Play will be well acted. Pray* (said I) *who are these People in the Cart, and what are they come here for? Come here for!* (replied he) *Why, these are the chief Actors of this Day's Comedy.*

I began then to view them a little more attentively; and as the Cart drew near, I perceiv'd that each of these Persons, dress'd in such a gay Manner, had a Cord about his Neck, by which he was to be hang'd up next Moment. I was going to ask my Friend the Meaning of that gaudy Dress, which appear'd to me so unsuitable to the melancholy Occasion; but I was diverted from it by an Harangue of one of the Highwaymen. He stands up very unconcernedly; and after he had cough'd, hemm'd, and wiped his Face, he stretch'd on a Pair of White Gloves, which he pull'd out of his Pocket, and then address'd himself to the Crowd, and told 'em, that God had permitted him to come to that untimely End, not for the Robberies he had committed, but for *playing at Cards on Sundays.* Had it not been for *this Sin*, he fancied, his other Crimes would never have been discover'd, and he might have quietly carried on his Trade all his Days.

While this Patibulary Orator was speaking it with great Fluency, one of his Companions was making a thousand wry Faces, and comical Gestures; and every now and then dropping an awkward

ward Jest, to make the Spectators laugh. If I had not known before-hand how this Farce would end, I should have imagin'd myself at some Mountebank's Stage. Our Highwayman spoke pretty much like one of these itinerant Doctors, when he is setting off the Properties of his Packets; and the other Fellow, who diverted the Company with Grimace and dumb Shew, was the perfect Picture of a *Merry Andrew* or *Jack Pudding*.

As I was observing with the utmost Attention, whether this false Bravery, and affected Heroism, of these unhappy Wretches, would hold out to the last, the Hangman, having before tied the Ropes to the Gallows, gave a sudden Lash to the Horses, which presently carried away the Theatre from under the Actors, and left them suspended in the Air. Upon this, a great Number of People ran up to shorten their Pain. Some pull'd them by the Feet, others gave them great Blows upon the Stomach. By the Ease and Composure with which all this was done, I perceiv'd that the *English* have nothing of that wise Delicacy which appears in other Nations, and fills them with just Horror at those who by their Crimes bring themselves to a violent Death.

When I returned from this dismal Spectacle, I was still affected with the Insensibility of some of these Malefactors, and had the Curiosity to enquire of my Friend the Reasons of this strange Conduct. Pray (said I) *how came these two Highwaymen to affect an Air of Bravery beyond any of their Fellow Sufferers? The Reason* (reply'd my Friend) *was this; they were ambitious of the Honour of dying like Gentlemen of Spirit. In other Countries, when a Criminal is condemn'd, he can think of nothing but the other World, and how to prepare himself for Death. But here it is quite otherwise; a Man of Courage thinks only how he may wipe off the Ignominy* of

of his Punishment, by his intrepid Way of bearing it. His first Care is to get himself well trimm'd and powder'd; then he must be dress'd in a spruce Manner, partly with the Air of a Funeral, and partly with that of a Wedding. Last of all he prepares a Speech, such as you have just now heard, and delivers it with a Grace at the Gallows; a Copy of this Dying Speech he gives to the Parson who attends him, and who gives his Word to see it printed.—What! (said I, astonish'd at what I had heard) and will all the vile Stuff which that Fellow utter'd just now, be publish'd to the World? I shall no longer wonder that the most part of your Malefactors, in this Country, die like Beasts, and without the least Signs of Remorse; or, like Ideots, spend their last Moments in playing Tricks to divert a Mob.

'Is it possible that a Nation who pride themselves in their distinguish'd good Sense, should permit the publick Executions to be thus burlesqu'd, and consequently all the Crimes that disturb Society to be encouraged? Shame has sometimes a stronger Influence on the Mind than the Fear of Punishment. How many Men would risque their Lives to reap the Advantage of some criminal Enterprize, if the Fear of exposing their Families to eternal Infamy, did not restrain them? But in this Country they not only make a Jest of any Disgrace reflected on the Relations of a Criminal, but also endeavour, as much as possible, to abate the Shame of his Execution. Notwithstanding the Murders and Villanies of his Life, a Malefactor may acquire the Esteem of his Country at his Death; he needs only but die like a Beast, or a Madman, and he is sure of the Character of a brave Fellow. When I consider this, I can't but wonder that the Number of Criminals is not much greater in England than it really is; for all imaginable Pains, one would think, is taken to encrease them. 'Tis true, they

they are punish'd, but this Punishment carries so little Shame in it, that the Sufferer dies with an Air of Insensibility and Impudence, and, instead of a just Abhorrence of his Memory, the History of his Bravery is published, and transmitted to Posterity.

'If, instead of applauding the stupid Harangue of the hardened Wretch, who has the Impudence to make a Jest of his own Death, his Behaviour met with proper Contempt; if his Insensibility and ill placed Courage drew upon him the double Indignation of Spectators, Men, who by the ordinary Behaviour of Malefactors, are encouraged to tread in their Steps, would be deterr'd by the Consideration of the Consequences of such Crimes. The Fear of Infamy would be a more powerful Restraint than the Apprehension of a violent Death, the Horror of which is greatly allay'd by the Applause they expect from the Resolution with which they die. With me indeed it is a Question who has the greater Share of Folly, whether the Man who applauds a hardned Criminal, or the Criminal who imagines he can efface his Guilt by shewing no Remorse for it.'

All these Reasons, dear *Isaac*, made no Impressions on my Friend; nay, he even pretended to defend this flagrant Abuse, founded on nothing but ridiculous Prejudice, and thought he had acquitted himself to Purpose, when he alledged the natural Intrepidity of the *English*, and their Contempt of Death. *It is, said I, for this very Reason they should have other Motives to restrain them.*

'If Criminals are not restrained by the Terror of Death, you must have Recourse to some other Methods to deter them from Mischief. In other Countries where the Dread of Death terrifies enough, it may be excusable to abate something of Infamy in their Executions, because all the Ends

‘of Punishment is otherwise answered : But amongst you, *English*, the Case is different ; the Fear of Death alone will never keep you to your Duty.’ All these Arguments my Friend answered with a Laugh. I must own, that, in this Respect, the *English* appear to be a very odd Sort of People.

I make no Doubt, my dear *Isaac*, but thou wilt be as much shock’d as I, at this ridiculous Practice of lessening the Infamy due to those Miscreants who die by the Halter ; and thou wilt own, that there are some Prejudices amongst the politest Nations, in every Respect, as ridiculous as those of rude Savages. Any Man, who will use his Reason, may easily see, that it is a less Mistake to push the Severity against Malefactors too far, than, by a false Pity towards them, to injure Society. All Methods should be invented that can strike such Wretches with Terror, especially if they pretend to dare Death itself.

The Duky of *Vandosme*, during the last War in *Italy*, caused a great Number of Banditti to be hang’d up, but without being able to destroy that pestilent Breed ; for every Day new Murders were committed, either from Jealousy or some private Quarrel. The General, troubled at these Disorders, bethought himself of a Remedy to the growing Evil : Laying hold on the *Italian* Foible, viz. Superstition, he gave Orders that every one convicted of Murder should instantly be hang’d without the Benefit of a Confessor, or Time to procure from their Priests the necessary Passports to the other World. This Method had the desired Effect ; it terrified these Villains infinitely more than Death. They could boldly run the Risque of the Gallows, but could not bear the Thoughts of being hang’d without Confession.

When I was at *Paris*, the Chevalier de *Maisin* told me a Story of a Soldier, who being condemn-

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ned to be shot, refused obstinately to submit to the Popish Ceremonies prescribed on such Occasions: All the Arguments they could use were not able to make him alter his Resolution. In vain did they tell him that he was a Prey to Devils, and that he must burn for ever in Hell. In this sullen Disposition, he was led forth to his Execution. By the Way, he had the Curiosity to ask, *where he was to be buried*. To which it was answered, *that his Body would be thrown into a common Sewer*. *What!* said he, *shan't I be buried in consecrated Ground?* By *no means*, replied the Priest who attended him; *since you resolve not to die like a Christian, you shall not have the Honour to lie amongst them when you are dead*. The Thoughts of not being interred in holy Ground made a deeper Impression on this Fellow's Mind than the Fear of eternal Damnation. He was unconcerned at his Soul's going to Hell, but could not bear that his Body should be thrown into a common Sewer.

Behold, my dear *Isaac*, the great Effects that Shame will produce, even in the Mind of the most hardened Criminal. There always remains in the Breast of the most abandon'd Wretch, such a Degree of Self-love as will make them sensible of any Expression of Abhorrence towards them, For this Reason I think it not only just, but even expedient, to fix a Brand of Infamy upon the Relations of such as have died by the Hand of a Hangman. The Dishonour, which reflects from the Malefactor on those who are most dear to him, is a Curb that will restrain most Men. The Man, who is quite insensible of any Fear of Death, cannot, however, find in his Heart to bring perpetual Infamy on a Father, a Mother, a Wife, or Children.

I know, it may be objected, that this Rule seems contrary to Justice, in regard it involves the Innocent

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nocent in that Punishment which the Guilty only have deserved. In Answer, we should consider, that it is absolutely impossible that any Laws can be framed so as never to be attended with any Inconvenience to particular Persons; it is sufficient if they are evidently calculated for the Benefit of the greater Part. This is the Opinion of a great Philosopher, who, in order to prove the Equity of the *Roman* Laws relating to insolvent Debtors, asserts, that it is better a small Number should lose the Benefit of a just Excuse, than that every body should have a specious Pretext to evade a just Debt*.

Adieu, my dear *Isaac*. Let Contentment and Success attend thee in all thy Affairs.

London, *****.

* *Satius enim erat à paucis etiam justam excusationem non accipi, quam ab omnibus aliquam tentari.* Seneca de Beneficiis, Lib. VII. Cap. xvi.



LETTER CXLIII.

ISAAC ONIS to AARON MONCECA.

THE Letters, dear *Monceca*, wherein thou hast favoured me with an Account of the learned Men in *England*, have put me on reflecting what great Men our own Nation has produced, and how they are unknown even to most of the Learned themselves. The *Nazarenes* generally

generally are of Opinion, that our Brethren are plunged in gross Ignorance, and that Obstinacy is the grand Support of our Religion. Some of their Doctors have taught a very strange Sort of Doctrine, and utterly inconsistent with right Notions of the supreme Being. They maintain, that God permits the Unbelief of the *Israelites*, in order to confirm the Faith of the *Nazarenes*. Now, can any thing be more palpably false? Let us suppose, for Argument's Sake, that the *Jewish* Religion is false; Would it not be still absurd to imagine, that God should destroy and damn a Number of his Creatures, merely to afford Means of Salvation to the rest? Is it necessary for him to make use of such a cruel Stratagem to keep some People stedfast in their Belief? The *Nazarene* Vanity appears most flagrant in their pretending to defend such an Absurdity. Is it not enough, that they themselves load us with the most bitter Contempt? Will they further engage God in the Quarrel, and make him accessory to their Cruelties, in direct Contradiction to his essential Goodness? We may cease wondering, my dear *Monceca*, at the Pride of certain Philosophers, who would make us believe, that the whole Universe was made for the Sake of Man alone; that numberless Worlds, vastly larger than this which we inhabit, and that so many Suns, bigger and brighter than that which enlightens our System, are scatter'd and shine thro' the boundless Expanse, for no other End but to entertain the Sight of a miserable Worm upon the little Spot of our Earth. This Opinion, however absurd, is, notwithstanding, more reasonable than to believe that God makes one Soul eternally miserable, to furnish out Means for another to become eternally happy.

Visions of this Stamp are so glaringly ridiculous, that it is easy to expose them, even to the meanest

meanest Capacity: But the *Nazarene* Divines will not indulge us the Privilege of confuting their Errors. When one of our Rabbies writes a Book in our Defence, our Adversaries are forbid, under the severest Penalties, to read it: And in some Countries they carry the Matter so far, as to deprive even the *Jews* themselves of the Benefit of such Instructions. In *Italy*, for Instance, we are prohibited to have, in our Custody, the Commentaries of *Abarbinel* on the *Minor Prophets*. Thou knowest, my dear *Monceca*, what an excellent Book that is; the more our Enemies condemn it, the more they represent it as dangerous, so much the more should we esteem it. The Jealousy and Tyranny of their Priests hath not been satisfied with prohibiting this single Performance: Several of their Doctors have asserted, that it is convenient, yea, and even necessary. to prohibit all the Works of that Author, because they are capable to confirm us in our Religion*. Is it not a pretty Way of refuting a Book, by suppressing it? What will the Learned; nay, what will even those, who use their Reason ever so little, think of such a Conduct?

Indeed it is not without Reason that the *Nazarenes* are afraid of the Spirit and Learning of *Abarbinel*. That illustrious Rabbi was nothing inferior to our famous *Maimonides*. Whatever Malice our Enemies have shewed against his Writings, they readily own, that, in all his Interpretations, that have nothing to do with the *Jewish* Controversies, he is judicious, clear, and full of Candour. Can they say more in his Favour? We cannot

* In his etiam pluribus in locis canino dente Christianam religionem mordet & lacerat: ideoque merito illorum lectio & retentio Judæis interdicta est, nec eos apud se retinere audent, publicè saltem & palam, propter metum Christianorum. Bartolucci Bibliotheca Rabbinica, Tom. III. Pag. 876.

cannot expect they will ever approve of what makes against themselves.

The Merit of *Abarbinel* was such, that it procured him the Esteem of many of the *Nazarenes*. When he died, several of the *Venetian* Nobleimen attended his Funeral, together with the principal *Jews* of *Padua*. It was in a Church-yard of that City where they buried this learned *Jew*; and some Time after, they interred *Judah Mentz* in the same Place. This Rabbi was also a very eminent Man: He died Rector of the Academy of *Padua*. All the Men of Letters will allow him to have had a quick and lively Imagination, and an easy Way of speaking and writing: However, he had neither the Knowledge of *Manasseh Ben Israel*, nor the vast Learning of *Solomon Ben Virga*. The *Conciliator* of the first mention'd Rabbi is truly an excellent Work; and the *History of the Jews*, written by the latter, is a Performance that deserves the highest Esteem.

Abraham de Balmis, deserves a Place among the most distinguish'd *Literati* of our Nation. This excellent Physician, Philosopher and Grammarian, composed a Book of singular Use in the Study of the *Hebrew* Tongue. A *Nazarene* Critick did not, however, spare this great Man. As he had too much Candour to determine positively in Matters, which to him appear'd beyond the Reach of human Knowledge; and as he would examine Things thoroughly, before he admitted them for absolutely certain, he has been charged with having a Design to destroy all former Systems, without intending to establish any new one in their Stead. Thus, because he was not rash or dogmatical, he must needs be branded with the Name of Sceptick †.

The *Nazarenes* lie so at the Catch, for every thing that may blast the Reputation of our Authors,

* *Mansterus* in *Prefat. Gram. apud Spizelii Felicem Literatum*, P. 918.

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thors, that they scarce spare any. They seem to direct all their Force chiefly against those who have the greatest Merit. Thou knowest, my dear *Monceca*, that it is to the learned *Akiba* we are indebted for all the valuable Knowledge we have with respect to the Oral Law. Tho' I am a profess'd *Caraité*, yet I must ingenuously own, that, if nothing had been added to the Writings of this Rabbi, all that he has written, concerning the Oral Law, deserves to be received by every true *Israelite*, to whatever Sect he belongs. However, the distinguish'd Merit of this great Man cannot secure him against the Malice of the *Nazarene* Doctors. They represent him as a Man of little Learning, a cunning Fellow, and an Impostor. In this Manner they traduce our famous Kabbî, who, by his Candour and Knowledge, merits the honourable Title of *Sethumataah*, or the *Authentic*.

It must, notwithstanding, be allowed, that if all the Books which the *Jews* attribute to *Akiba* were truly genuine, the *Nazarenes* would have Reason to reject them, as stuffed with Lies and Fables. In this Respect they would do no more than the *Caraites* themselves. But it would be great Injustice to the Learning and Merit of that Rabbi, to believe that all the Reveries in the *Talmud* could claim him as their Author. It can't indeed be denied, that *Akiba* was the first Compiler of the *Deuteroses*, or *Jewish Traditions*, and that he collected into one Book what *Hillel*, *Simeon*, and other Doctors, had written on that Subject; but it can never be thought, that so learn'd a Man could possibly digest all the Extravagancies which we now see in the *Talmud*. It must have been some who came after him, and invented these Absurdities, or, at least, had the Weakness to transmit them to Posterity. The most zealous Partizans of the *Talmud* are forced to own, that *Akiba* was dead before Rabbi *Judab* composed

composed the *Misna*, or *Jerusalem Talmud*. They alledge, indeed, that the latter was born the very Day that the former died: But sure they have little Reason to add, upon this Occasion, that, when one Sun was eclipsed, another appear'd in the Horizon *. I protest, my dear *Monceca*, a Man must be a thorow Slave to Prejudice, who can discern the least Resemblance between these two Rabbies. I declare to thee, that long before I had a Thought of becoming *Caraites*, I always looked upon the one as a first Rate Scholar, and on the other as an Author of very little Credit.

Heaven has, at last, dispelled the Darknefs that covered my Eyes: I have discerned the Folly of these pretended Traditions, and have therefore rejected them. I made not this Step rashly, and without a careful Enquiry into the Matter. It was with Judgment and Reason that I exploded the *Talmud*, with all its idle Dreams: At least I'm persuaded, that I neglected no Mean to come at the Truth; and therefore, if I am still in an Error, I doubt not but the Deity, who knows my good Intentions, will forgive me. To me it seems utterly impossible, that God should be the Author of these childish Observances, which our Rabbies would palm upon us. Can it be thought that ever he should descend so low, as to the Necessities to which we are subjected by the Make and Structure of our Bodies? Is it not amazing Folly, to think that Religion has any thing to do with the Manner of our easing Nature? And yet some of our Rabbies have not blush'd to settle distinctly the Ceremony of that *secret Office*. In the first Place, they enjoin us never to turn our Breech but either to the North or South; next, we are forbid to
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* R. *Judah princeps natus est illo die quo obiit R. Akiba, de quo aiunt sol exortus est, & sol occidit.* Defence of the Antiquities of Times, Page 76.

remove our Garments, but in a sitting Posture; and the third sacred Rule in this important Business is, that we always take care to use the Left Hand, and not the Right, in Affairs of this Nature *.

Such are the goodly Mysteries of the Law, which can never be dispensed with! And, to give the greater Weight to these Impertinencies, they are foisted into the Writings of *Akiba*, upon whom they would gladly father these Baitard Precepts. But it is impossible to believe, that a Man of his Learning should have gone into such low and pitiful Absurdities. They only make use of this great Name to give Sanction to their own fantastical Dreams.

The Rabbies, dear *Monceca*, have done as much Prejudice to the *Jewish* Religion, by their impertinent Traditions, as the *Nazarene* Monks have done to theirs, by their shameful Superstitions. The weak Performances, both of the one and the other, have prejudiced Men of Sense against all Books, in general, which treat of the Ceremonies of both Religions. They are so scandalized at the many Foolries which they see not only tolerated, but even approved and highly commended, that they will never be persuaded that there can be any good Writers in these Communions, where they receive, as useful and necessary Rules, such gross Absurdities, as are scarce pardonable among Idiots themselves.

Thus, through a Prejudice fatal to our Men of Learning, the *Nazarenes* make no Distinction between our Rabbies, but condemn all in the Lump. For no better Reason, the Protestants condemn several excellent Books written by Catholick Divines;

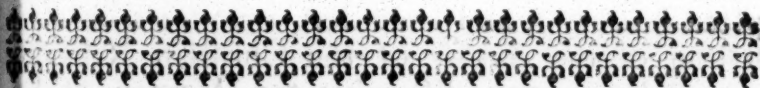
* *Dixit Akiba*,—*Tria didici*, 1. *Quod non versus orientem & occidentem, sed versus septentrionem & austrum convertere nos debemus.*
2. *Quod non in pedes erectum, sed jam confidentem, se retegere liceat.*
3. *Quod podex non dextrâ sed sinistra manu abstergendus sit.* *Babar-jetha in Mass. Berach. Fol. 62.*

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vines; such as, the *Moral Essays* of M. Nicole; the *Sermons* of Father *Burdaloue*, and many others. They rashly judge of all the Popish Books of Piety by the *Legend* of St *Francis*, the *Life* of *Mary Alacoque*, the *Works* of the Monk *Cesarius*, the *Mystical City of God*, and such like *Jesuitical Performances*. On the other Hand, there are but few Papists who will give themselves the Trouble to distinguish between a judicious Protestant, and a mere Visionary, who waits for the Accomplishment of the pretended Prophecies of *Jurieu*, or feeds himself with such ridiculous Chimeras. These are the unhappy Effects of that Prejudice occasioned by weak and wicked Writers, against the Religion which they profess.

Farewel, dear *Monceca*. May'st thou be ever easy, content and prosperous.

Cairo, *****.



LETTER CXLIV.

ISAAC ONIS to AARON MONCECA.

WITHIN these few Days, my dear *Monceca*, I have got acquainted with a *Samaritan Jew*. He has set me right with respect to many Things, of which formerly I had but very confused Ideas. I looked upon all the *Samaritans* to be notorious Hereticks, sunk in an Abyss of Error. I fancied, that they had not so much

much as one Ceremony which did in the least resemble those of the ancient *Israelites*; nay, I would scarce allow, that their Worship had any thing in common with the modern *Jews*; but now my Prejudices are entirely removed, and I am convinced of my gross Mistake.

Of all the *Jewish* Sects, the *Samaritans* deviate least from the Customs of our Fathers. Numbers of them live at *Gaza*, at *Damascus*, at *Cairo*, but chiefly at *Sichem*, which is now called *Neapolis*. They offer Sacrifices on Mount *Gerizim*, and strenuously maintain, that this is the only true Place where the God of *Israel* should be worshipped. In Defence of this Opinion, they appeal to a Passage of their *Pentateuch* *, which, they say, our Ancestors have grossly corrupted, by substituting Mount *Ebal* (from whence the Curses were pronounced) instead of Mount *Gerizim*, from whence the People were blessed. The *Samaritans* insist also on Prescription, and the uninterrupted Succession of their *High Priests* on this Mount. They further plead History †, and Tradition, with the tacit Confession of the *Author* of the Christian Religion, who did not contradict what the Woman of *Samarita* alledged, viz. *That their Fathers worshipped on Mount Gerizim* ‡. The same Charge of corrupting the Text, which the *Samaritans* exhibit against our Fathers, has been adopted by some *Nazarene* Doctors, who little imagine, that, in case the Charge be good, it will affect themselves no less than us. As this Hypothesis is attended with terrible Consequences, it will give me singular Satisfaction to have thy Thoughts upon the Subject.

The *Samaritan*, from whom I learn'd all this, assured me, that their Priests are, to this Day, of the Family of *Aaron*; and that they never marry out

* *Deut.* xxvii. 4. † *Joseph. Antiq.* Lib. IV. Cap. ult. and Lib. XIII. Cap. iii. ‡ *John* iv. 20, 21.

out of that House, lest thereby they should fully the Honour of the Sacerdotal Race. He asserts further, that the Altar, upon which they sacrifice, is the very same which the Children of *Israel* built, when they passed over *Jordan*.

I must own to thee, my dear *Monceca*, that I can scarce give Credit to this Story. To me it seems worthy of a Place in the fabulous Collections of the Rabbies. If any thing could make it probable, it must be the extraordinary Care, with which the *Samaritans* have always preserved the Customs of their Ancestors, and whatever comes transmitted under the venerable Name of Antiquity. They still make use of the old *Hebrew* Characters: These differ much from those in use among us, and which were the Invention of *Ezra*, after the Return from the *Babylonish* Captivity.

Thou wilt easily believe, my dear *Monceca*, that People so much attach'd to the Usages of our earliest Forefathers, as the *Samaritans* are, will be far enough from admitting all the Reveries of the *Talmud* as Rules of Faith. They go further in this Matter than even the *Caraites* themselves, acknowledging no other Scriptures but the *Pentateuch* only: They look upon the rest of the sacred Code to be indeed Histories written by pious Men, assisted by the Spirit of God, but of no decisive Authority, with respect to the Articles of Faith.

It is no difficult Matter to discover the Error of the *Samaritans* in this Point: For, since they allow that these Books were written by the very Persons whose Names they bear, and that their Authors were pious Men, enlighten'd by the Spirit of God, why should they scruple to admit the Authority of the Books themselves? If it could be made appear, that these who composed the *Talmud* were

Men of Learning, much more if it could be demonstrated that they were under the Direction of Heaven, the *Caraites* would not hesitate to receive it.

If we would refuse absolute Credit to any Book, 'tis necessary we deny the Inspiration of the Author: For, shall it be once admitted that a Book was written by divine Inspiration, the natural Consequence is, that we ought to submit to every Thing contained in it. Nothing can be more ridiculous than to pretend to make a Distinction between the Writings of Men, who were equally under the Direction of Heaven. Indeed we can't conceive how there can be different Degrees of Inspiration: all Books therefore, who have a just Claim to this Privilege, deserve equal Credit.

A famous *German* Divine * went near to maintain this absurd Opinion. In the Heat of a Dispute, he advanced a Proposition, which his Adversaries from that Time have often thrown in his Teeth. He affirmed, that the Work of a certain ancient Divine †, whom the *Nazarenes* generally esteem as one of their Apostles, was low, mean, and like Chaff, in comparison of the Writings of other Doctors of their Religion. His Enemies did not fail to improve this Advantage against him, so that he was forced at last to acknowledge his Error: And even his most zealous Partizans, at this Day, cannot but acknowledge he was inexcusable in maintaining an Opinion so contrary to Reason ‡. This Divine, in order to remove some Difficulties which press'd him, durst not indeed deny altogether the Credibility of the Book which made against him, but then he lessen'd it all he could, and made it much inferior to that of another

* *Luther.* † The Epistle general of St *James.* ‡ *Vide Wulfenb. res. ad Rom. refutationem, Page 103.*

another Author, which seem'd to patronize his Scheme.

It is strange to think how far Prejudice, and an excessive Fondness for their own Notions, will carry sometimes even the greatest of Men. Is it possible to dream of a greater Absurdity, than to suppose Degrees of Wisdom in the Spirit of God? Can any thing be advanced more contrary to common Sense than this Doctrine, that we may give more or less Credit to inspired Writings, in proportion as they favour our particular Schemes?

I know, my dear *Monceca*, that the Rabbins and *Caraites* are so far from imitating the impious Boldness of some *Nazarenes*, or the unreasonable Scruples of the *Samaritans*, that they preserve for all the Books of the sacred Canon an equal and infinite Respect; they are wiser than to venture to distinguish the Degrees of Authority in Writings equally inspired by the Divine Spirit. But, while they avoid one Error, they run into another, which is common to them, and to the most part of *Nazarene* Doctors. They wrest and torture several Passages of the sacred Writings, in order to force them into their Service; and by this means they make the Scripture vouch for all the Chimeras of their own heated Imaginations. There is nothing so absurd, not only with regard to Ceremonies, but even in fundamental Doctrines, which they will not attempt to prove out of the Bible.

Thus, for Instance, can any thing be imagined more wild and extravagant than the Rabbinical Interpretation of this Verse in the *Psalms*? Behold, *I was shapen in Iniquity, and in Sin did my Mother conceive me* *. Instead of going into the Opinion of the *Nazarene* Doctors, who plainly demonstrate that the Prophet is here speaking of that original Corruption which all Men derive from their first

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* Psalm li. 7.

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Parents, they will needs have it, that *Jesse* begat *David* in Adultery; for tho', in Reality, he was begotten on his own Wife, yet, say they, the Father thought otherwise, and took her for a Maid-servant, upon whose Chastity he had made several Attempts.

Behold, my dear *Monceca*, a fine Explication of this easy Text. What Opinion so absurd, that we may not expect to see evinced by Scripture Authority, when, out of the plainest Things, the Rabbies dare forge such romantick Adventures, and impose on the World a Story so extraordinary as the pretended Adultery of *David's* Father, when there is not a single Word of it in the sacred Books?

An *Italian Jew* thought it not sufficient to adopt this fabulous Tale, in a certain Piece which he published; but he has improved the Story, and carried it further than any of his Brethren had done before him. He makes a long Dissertation, to prove, forsooth, that *Jesse* did right in lying with his Maid, because his Wife was then pretty far gone in Years, and, as he supposed, past Child-bearing *.

This Fable, dear *Monceca*, contains an excellent Moral; and could our sage Rabbies get it but once universally received, it would probably raise the Wages of Women Servants, in proportion as it enlarges the Sphere of their Usefulness.

Confess now, my dear *Monceca*, that the *Caraites* have Reason on their Side, when they reject such Rabbinical Comments. However much thou art attached to their Sect, 'tis impossible thou shouldst not see their Errors. That Trouble and Embarrassment, which generally attends the Change of one's Religion, detains thee as yet in the wrong Way: But I hope, that the God of our Fathers will soon

grant

* Vide *Precetti da esser imparati dalle donne Ebreë*, Page 69.

grant thee his victorious Grace, to enlighten thy Mind, and knock off those Chains, which at present bind thee to the Rabbiniſts; then ſhalt thou come and join the *Caraites*, who are the only true *Jews*, nay, almoſt the only People in the World who don't abuſe the ſacred Writings, in order to authorize their own private Opinions.

Many of the *Nazarene* Doctors, as alſo the Cadies and Muſties among the *Muſſulmen*, are guilty of the very ſame Fault with our Rabbies. They will not ſubmit their Opinions to theſe Writings which they allow to be inſpired, but force upon them a Senſe conformable to their Opinions; inſomuch that ten Divines, all of oppoſite Sentiments to one another, will equally claim the Authority of Scripture, which every Man explains according to his particular Humour. This Conduct, ſo deſtructive of the publick Peace and Welfare, has occaſioned many religious Wars and Diviſions in States.

The *Nazarenes*, my dear *Monceca*, would be happy, did they obſerve the ſame Laws with us *Caraites*, who never preſume to write any Comments on the ſacred Scriptures. We look upon it to be the Height of Profaneneſs, to mingle human Opinions with divine Inſtitutions. The *Caraites* give implicate Faith to every thing contained in the Scriptures, without pretending to comprehend what is obſcure and myſterious. But for this wiſe Maxim, they had been, at this Day, involved in the ſame Troubles and Confuſion with others. They would have had a Multitude of Doctors, all differing in Opinions, and really darkning thoſe Points which they profeſs to illuſtrate; till, by Degrees, their Doubts increaſed to ſuch a Pitch, as would land, at laſt, in downright Scepticiſm or Irreligion.

In order to prove the Usefulness of Commentaries on the sacred Writings, 'tis enough if we can shew, that they are calculated to do more Hurt than Good. Now there is nothing more easy than to demonstrate the Truth of this Proposition. In the first Place, we lay it down as a Principle, that since God has been pleased to prescribe Laws and Rules to Mankind, he hath unquestionably delivered them in a plain and intelligible Manner. Indeed it is absurd to say, that God has revealed his Will to Man in such abstruse Terms as he can't comprehend. This would be, in effect, to say, that God had commanded Men to obey him, while, at the same time, he did not desire that they should obey him. We must therefore acknowledge, that God hath revealed himself in a clear and intelligible Manner; Why then should we pretend to explain this Revelation, and make it more clear? Doth a *Divine*, a *Musti*, a *Rabbi*, or a *Bonze*, understand the Extent of Mens Capacities better than he who made them? If God had judged it proper to reveal to Man those Mysteries, which these spiritual Guides profess to unriddle, without doubt he could have done it.

But it may be objected, that several of the sacred Books are certainly written in a very obscure Stile, and many Things in them are quite beyond our Reach. These, without Question, were given by God for some Use: But how is it possible to make this Use of them, if they were not first understood? It is absolutely necessary therefore, that we search out their hidden Sense.

This Way of Reasoning, my dear *Monceca*, however specious it may appear, is, notwithstanding, false and captious. If there are in Scripture certain Passages which we cannot understand, we ought to conclude that they are not necessary to Salvation, because we can never practise what we don't

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don't know; and it is in vain for us to pry into those Secrets which God hath but half reveal'd. He knows very well, that it is convenient for us to have but a confused Idea of some Things. To penetrate into these is criminal; and Heaven frequently punishes those that are guilty of this Presumption, by leaving them to bewilder themselves. The *Nazarene* Doctors, who have commented on the *Revelation*, a very obscure Book, which they esteem as sacred, are a clear Proof of what I now advance. The Protestants found upon this Book all their Invectives against the Papists; and the Papists, in their Turn, make use of it to paint out their Adversaries in the most odious Colours. Can there be a greater Abuse of a Work supposed to be dictated by God himself.

Adieu, my dear *Monceca*: Live content and happy; and beware of indulging a presumptuous Curiosity.

Cairo, *****.



LETTER CXLV.

AARON MONCECA to ISAAC ONIS.

THE *English*, my dear *Isaac*, are not content with enjoying perfect Liberty in this World: They likewise claim a Liberty to go out of it, when Life grows tedious, or when Misfortunes press them too closely. At my first Arrival

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Arrival in this City, I was amazed at the frequent Accounts of such tragical Deaths. Sometimes it happen'd, that the Man, whom I had spoke with in the Evening, took it in his Head to cut his Throat next Day. Those who brought me the News of this Catastrophe, instead of being affected with this mad Action, seem'd rather to approve of it. If I ask, What Reasons could induce the distracted Creature to destroy himself? They answer, with the greatest Indifference, *We know not, 'tis probable he was weary of this World, and had a Curiosity to see how they go on in the other. His Life was his own, and, in taking it away, he hurt no body but himself.*

I imagined at first, my dear *Isaac*, that those who took it in their Heads to make away themselves were lunatick, and deprived of the Use of their Reason. I could never believe that the *English* hang'd themselves, or cut their Throats, after mature Deliberation; but, by my own Observation, and the Testimony of several Persons of undoubted Credit, I am now convinced that the Case is just so.

About two Years ago, a certain Labourer and his Wife, being both weary of the Troubles they endured in Life, form'd a Resolution to put a speedy End to them all at once. They had a Daughter, about five or six Years of Age, and thought it would be Injustice to leave the Child expos'd to those Hardships which they could not bear themselves. After they had coolly consider'd the Case, they came at last to this Determination, that she should accompany her Parents to the next World. When they had prepared and settled every thing necessary for the Execution of their Design, they took a Fancy to justify it to the Publick. With this View they drew up a Narrative of the Reasons of their Conduct, with a long Detail of the Mi-

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series they had suffered. They complained, that, in spite of their utmost Endeavours, in an honest Way, to procure themselves Bread, they had experienced all sorts of Misfortunes; and that the more they struggled, the more they were distressed by their cruel Fortune. In a Word, they alledged, that they could see but one Way left to preserve them from doing dishonest Things; and to this they had Recourse, trusting in the Mercy of God, into whose Hands they recommended their departing Souls. Thus having finished their Apology, they first cut the Throat of their Daughter, and then hang'd themselves.

This unnatural Crime of Self-murder is not confined to the meaner sort of People; Persons of Rank and Figure are often guilty of it. Nothing is more common, than to hear of Lords and Gentlemen who cut their Throats, for no other Reason, but because they have taken a Distaste at Life. And this mad Action is so far from fixing an indelible Stain on their Memories, that they often find Numbers to approve and commend them for it.

It is really incredible, for what slight Reasons the *English* sometimes dispatch themselves. 'Tis not many Months since a Fellow cut his Throat, purely because an additional Duty was laid on spiritous Liquors. He could not think, forsooth, of living any longer, since he must pay dearer for his beloved *Gin*.

I am credibly inform'd of an Accident, yet more surprising. A certain *Englishman*, reviewing his Life, fancied he saw nothing in it but a tiresome Repetition of same Actions. *What*, says he, *have I been doing all my Days? I get up in the Morning; I eat and drink at Noon; I walk about all Day, and at Night go to Bed: This, without Alteration, is my Course of Life: Most Part of my Time is spent in*
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*dress*ing and *undress*ing. *A fine Employment truly! Come, come, I am quite weary of this endless Circle, and therefore must be gone out of the World.* This Resolution was no sooner taken, than our *Eng-*
lishman, to put an End to his Weariness, takes up a Pistol, and shoots himself through the Head. Without doubt, one would think, a Man who murders himself on so trifling an Account, must be looked upon with universal Horror. But the Case is quite otherwise here; provided he met his Fate with intrepid Boldness, he is regarded as a kind of Hero. But if it be known that he discover'd the least Signs of Fear, at the Approach of Death, it would greatly diminish his Reputation; his Death would go for nothing, and the Merit of this last Heroick Action would be entirely lost.

He, who would acquire the Character of a Man of Courage in *England*, must not only dare the greatest Crimes, but must also commit them without any Shame or Remorse. Some Years ago, a *Frenchman* kill'd himself, but was so far from gaining any Honour by the Action, that, before he expired, he had the Mortification to see himself treated with the utmost Contempt. Nothing less could serve *Monsieur*, but he must imitate the brave *English*. Whenever he heard of any Man who had cut his Throat, he felt a secret Emulation in his Breast exciting him to follow so glorious an Example. *You shall see one of these Days*, said he one Time to his Family, *something that will surprise you. I shall convince the World that the French are as brave Fellows as the English: Yes, yes, this Task I dare undertake.* As he express'd himself in such general Terms, his Friends could not divine what he would be at. After some further Deliberation, he at last resolves to establish the Honour of the *French Nation*, which he imagined deeply stain'd, by their Want of Courage to kill them-

selves.

selves. Accordingly one Day, when he was left alone, he took up his Razor, and attempted to cut his Throat: But not having Courage thoroughly to do his Work, he only gave himself a deep Wound. Being frightened to see the Blood gushing out, he called in the Neighbours to assist him. Among the rest, some *English* came running in; but they no sooner saw how the Matter stood, than immediately they began to insult the poor unhappy Wretch. *These French Dogs*, said they, *must needs be aping us, though they have not Courage to cut a Throat handsomely. Look ye there, the cowardly Scoundrel! he has not gone deep enough by half an Inch.* While the *English* were going on with these fine Reflections, in came the Relations of the poor Man, who instantly sent for a Surgeon; but all was to no Purpose; for the *Frenchman* died within two Days, and died without deriving that Honour on his Country which he intended.

I am out of all Patience, my dear *Isaac*, to see Men, who can use their Reason in most Things of Moment, acting contrary to common Sense in some others, even of the last Importance. In this Respect the *English* are culpable, when they applaud the Distraction of such, as, for the slightest Reasons, make an Attempt upon their Lives. Not to brand the Memory of such with deserved Infamy, is a kind of Approbation of all the cruel and unnatural Effects of Melancholy and a savage Disposition. These two are indeed the real Source of those fatal Accidents, which the *English* falsely ascribe to Greatness of Soul. All the uneasy Reflections which commonly pave the Way for this dreadful Catastrophe, are the Effects of a dark, gloomy Temper, and of a fierce untractable Humour, which has not Constancy enough to bear Misfortunes. 'Tis not therefore an Instance of Courage, but of Weakness, when a Man dis-

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patches himself. In Reality, there is much more Bravery requisite to support a sudden Change of Fortune, than, by Violence, to set one's self beyond the Reach of it.

The Crime of Self-murder is utterly inexcusable, in whatever Light we view it. If we consider it as Philosophers, we will discover a Pusillanimity directly opposite to that Fortitude of Mind which induced some great Men to part with Life, but never till they were forced to it, either for the Good of their Country, or for the Preservation of their Honour. We never read of an old *Greek*, or *Roman*, who cut his Throat in a Fit of the Spleen, or for some little Disaster that had befallen him. The noble Hero, who threw himself into a Gulph to save *Rome*, could have born any personal Misfortune, without a Thought of flying to Death for Sanctuary.

Marius is an Example of a great Man, bravely supporting all the Caprice of Fortune. How many *Englishmen* would have fled to the other World from such a Persecution as that of *Sylla*? This heroick Soul was proscrib'd, pursu'd, and reduced to the hard Necessity of hiding himself half naked among the Reeds in a Morass; and yet patiently expected the Decision of his Fate from Heaven. He judg'd it unworthy his famed Courage to court Death to screen him from his Misfortunes. Can it be objected, that *Marius* was afraid to die, and that this Hero had really less Resolution than an *English* Cobler, who dares cut his Throat with his own Shaving-knife? I hope there are none but would blush to advance so ridiculous an Absurdity.

I should by much prefer the steady Firmness of a certain *Spaniard*, to this Ferocity, which they disguise under the Name of Greatness of Soul. This Man had, with hard Labour for the Space

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of twenty Years together, gathered as much as would be a comfortable Subsistence for him in his old Age: But cruel Fortune, in an Instant, stript him of all. The Merchant, in whose Hand he had lodged his whole Stock, becomes a Bankrupt, and leaves him not worth a Groat. Hundreds of *Englishmen*, upon the News of such a Disaster, would have prepared for themselves a Pistol, a Razor, or a Halter. The wiser *Spaniard* resolves to conquer Adversity, and make Fortune blush at her own Injustice. Preserving therefore his usual Composure of Mind, he presents a Rope to the blind Goddess, with this Compliment; *Go hang thyself, foolish Slut, out of Spite, because thou canst not drive me to this desperate End.*

If again we consider this frightful Practice of Self-Murder as it affects Society, we shall find it big with the greatest Evils. What Revolutions, what Confusions, what Mischiefs, may we not dread in that State, where the Members make a Jest, not only of Death, but of all its Consequences? 'Tis certain, that a Man who is above the Apprehension of dying, or of any Punishment after Death, is capable of the greatest Wickedness while he lives. Religion and the Fear of Death, are the two great Curbs of a vicious Disposition; and when these Restraints are taken off, in any Society, what Crimes and Disorders will be the Consequence? The greatest Criminal, in such a Case, will laugh at the severest legal Punishment: He needs only so much Precaution as to have the Power of dispatching himself, as soon as apprehended. Murders, Robberies, Assassinations, must be frequent: Kings themselves would not sit secure on their Thrones. It is not Death, but the exquisite Tortures inflicted on Paricides and Traitors, that deters them from attacking the Lives of Princes: Witness the last Words of *Clement* the

Monk, who assassinated *Henry III.* *I thank God,* cried the Monster, while the Soldiers were stabbing him, *that I die so easily; for I did not expect to escape at this Rate, or to have so smooth a Passage to the other World.*

It must be acknowledged, my dear *Isaac*, that there can be nothing more dangerous in a State, than People who can't be restrained by the Fear of Punishment. For one Man, who is guided by a Sense of Honour and Justice, there are Hundreds who are kept within Bounds only by Fear and Punishments. It can't be denied, that Men are more prone to Evil than to Good; and therefore all Usages, all Customs, which tend to weaken the Obligations to Virtue, are prejudicial to Society. How much then ought we to abhor a Practice, which takes off all manner of Restraint, and opens a Door to a Deluge of Evils? Can there be an Instance of greater Madness, than to honour this unnatural Crime with the Name of Courage and Greatness of Soul?

Take Care of thy Health, my dear *Isaac*; and make use of thy Reason in Adversity.

*London, *****.*



LETTER



LETTER CXLVI.

AARON MONCECA to ISAAC ONIS.

TIS my Opinion, dear *Isaac*, that the Tragick Poets in *France* are as much superior to those of the same Profession in *England*, as the Philosophers of the former Nation are inferior to those of the latter. There is as great a Difference between *Shakespear* and *Corneille*, *Adisson* and *Racine*, as between *Des Cartes* and *Newton*, *Mallebranche* and *Locke*. It is not, that the *English* Poets want Fire, and lively Imagination; on the contrary, they have a great deal of Spirit, and Force of Genius: But the Unhappiness is, when they have raised themselves to Heaven, they are not able to support themselves, but, being dazzled with their own Height, sink all of a sudden to the very Ground. They have not the least Knowledge of the Rules, or they affect to despise them; and therefore 'tis no Wonder they are unable to direct, with Judgment and Taste, that Strength of Fancy which Nature has bestow'd on them.

Let the Invention be ever so fruitful, let the Wit be ever so sparkling; let the Sentiments be ever so bold, Regularity is still wanting in all Arts. The meanest Architect, who observes the Rules of *Palladio*, will succeed much better than a Mason who has Genius, but is, notwithstanding, rash and ignorant. The little Church of *St Jusline*,

in *Padua*, affords a more delightful Prospect than the Pyramids of *Egypt*. Monuments of Grandeur indeed! but such as favour more of *Gothick* Barbarity, than of *Greek* or *Roman* Elegance.

Such is the State of the *English* Stage. I never saw so much Genius with so few good Performances. They act every Day at *London* a sort of frightful Farces, to which they scruple not to give the pompous Name of Tragedies. I have seen in one of the best *English* Plays, three Witches introduced riding on a Broomstick, and boiling Herbs in a Caldron. I have seen the Stage representing a Church-yard, and the Grave-diggers playing at Bowls with the Skulls of dead Men; and, which is ten times worse, I have seen all this applauded.

Dryden, but especially *Addison*, hath taken Pains to polish this barbarous Muse; but, in spite of all they could do, she still retains too much of the Savage. It seems *Melpomene* can't put on the modest and majestick Air in *England*, which she once had in *Greece*, and with which she appears at this Day in *France*. What strange Alterations have they made in the Translation of *Voltaire's* *Zara*? When this Tragedy came to be acted on the *English* Stage, one might see that young Princess tearing her Hair, and tumbling about, like a Convulsive. The Author, sure, is little obliged to the Translator for such extravagant Additions. However, this may be alledg'd in Excuse, the *English* Poet was forced to accommodate the Play to the publick Taste; before it could take, in this Country, it must be made ridiculous. In order to obtain Applause at *London*, the Dramatick Writer must exhibit Monsters to the Spectators; the Probable will never affect them in the least. The Reason is not from any Want of Liking to a natural Description; there are, in *Shakespeare*, num-

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berless Passages extremely just, without the least Extravagance. But the Mischief is, when these happen to be long, the Audience grow sick of them; and nothing but the Marvelous can rouse their Spirits, and recal their Attention.

Some Years ago, the *English* had Poets who wrote several very regular Plays, but they have not succeeded; they are generally condemn'd as dull and heavy. Indeed there seems to be Ground for the Criticism, they are so in Fact; and one, who sees the modern Tragedies, would be tempted to believe, that the *English* Poets have a Faculty of straining their Subjects, and sacrificing Truth to the Vanity of shewing the Force of their Genius, insomuch that, in their best Pieces, the greatest Beauties are blended with the greatest Faults.

It seems, says a modern Author, that the English Genius has hitherto been able to produce nothing but irregular Beauties. The glaring Monsters of Shakespear are infinitely more pleasing than all the wise Order of modern Poets. The Poetical Genius of England may be compar'd to a luxuriant Tree planted by Nature, which throws out a Multitude of Branches, and grows with a prodigious and unequal Force; but if you attempt to put a Force upon Nature, and would bring it up like a Tree of the Garden at Marli; it will immediately wither and die.*

Notwithstanding the *English* Tragedians are, at this Day, far short of the Perfection and Merit of the *French*, it is not, however, impossible, that, some Time or other, they should reach, nay, even go beyond them. The Time will come, and probably is near, when the *English* will correct all their former Errors. Their Genius still remains, and they begin to accustom themselves to Rules, which will bring them to Perfection in an Art

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which,

* Voltaire, *Le tres Philosophiques*, Let. XVIII. Page 162.

which, hitherto, they have not well understood. In a little Time, they will unite the Wisdom and Majesty, the Purity and Decorum, of the *French* Theatre, with the sublime, the grand, and pathetic of the *English* Tragedy, excluding every thing that is low, ridiculous, or unnatural. The Poets of this Country have much the Advantage of Foreigners, by introducing a great deal of Action in their Plays. Many of the best *French* Pieces are, to speak properly, nothing but Conversations distinguish'd into five Acts. To read them affords greater Entertainment than to see them acted, because the Action languishes for Want of a sufficient Variety of Incidents.

The Theatres of *Paris* and *London* represent exactly the different Characters of the two Nations. They speak at *Paris*, but at *London* they act. 'Tis not at all strange then, that the *French* should speak better than the *English*, since every Man is allow'd to excel in his own Profession. For the same Reason, the amorous Intrigues in the *French* Plays are more interesting and better conducted than in the *English*. The Consideration of this Difference of Character, will enable us to judge of the Merit of the two Theatres. The Character of the *French* is Tenderness: Love is their prevailing Passion. Gallantry is, in a manner, their common Profession; it is the very Life and Soul of the Court. The Ladies naturally speak the Language of the Heart; and, tho' their Actions are not always suitable, yet, in Dignity of Expression, they are nothing inferior to the Heroine of a Romance. It is a common Thing at *Paris*, to hear a Female *Platonick* reasoning with the greatest Keeness, that Sense has nothing to do with Love, in a Person of Birth; and that this Passion is confin'd to the Mind and Soul, the Body has no Share in it; and yet this Philosophick

Lady

Lady makes her Appointments with a Gallant every Night.

In *France*, the Men speak and act in the same Manner with the Fair Sex: They declaim against Infidelity, and sometimes affect a Contempt for a Woman who has made a false Step. There are certain Moments, when you would take a *French Petit Maitre* for the original Hero of some Romance: But if you watch his Motions, he'll soon put off the Character: Observe his Conduct but for twenty-four Hours, and you'll see him demolish his fine System of Morality twenty Times in that short Space.

It is natural to suppose, that in a Country where the Language, the Finess, and all the Arts of Love, are so well understood, they should be able to express them in the best manner. A Painter, who draws after the best Models, and copies Nature, will add more Life and Beauty to his Figures, than he who paints only from the Strength of Imagination. *Racine* felt all the Tenderness which he so well expresses in his Verses: He had said in Prose to *Channele* * whatever he says in Verse to his Heroines. Most part of those Beauties we admire in his Works, were owing to his Constitution, and to the particular Taste of his Country. Had he been an *Englishman*, he would have wanted that Advantage: He must, in order to please, have sought some other Method to move the Passions of Spectators than by tender Scenes, otherwise he must have fallen into the same Error with *Addison*. The *Cato* of this Author is a most perfect Piece, if we throw out a cold Love-Intrigue, which makes it languish, and serves only to divert the Attention from the magnificent Scenes of that excellent Tragedy. If *Corneille* had wrote in *England*, he would not have suffer'd so much as

Racine:

* A famous Actress, with whom *Racine* was in love.

Racine: He had all the Talents and Qualifications necessary to succeed on an *English* Theatre. The last Act of his *Rhodogune* is a Master-piece, and deserves to be admired every where; but it seems particularly calculated for the Genius of *London*.

The *English* Poets have Strokes as beautiful and bright as any in *Corneille*, but then they are not so uniform as he: If this Author sinks sometimes, the *English* do it oftner, and more perceptibly: If in some Places he be low and dull, they are often ridiculous and extravagant. One is surprized, at *Paris*, to see the great *Corneille* making use of low Phrases, even in some of his best Performances; and they stick not to censure, very freely, every Thought that appears below the Dignity of his Subject. How often have the following Verses of his *Nicomedes* been turned into Ridicule?

*Madame, encore un coup, cet homme est-il à vous;
Et, pour vous divertir, est-il si nécessaire.
Que vous ne lui puissiez ordonner de se taire?*

But what would our *Parisians*, who are so critical as to Stile, think, if they saw *Shakespear's Julius Caesar* acted upon their Stage, and the Coblers and Tailors of *Rome* introduced holding an Interview with *Brutus* and *Cassius*.

The very same Reasons which incline People at *Paris* to forgive the Faults of *Corneille*, serve at *London* to excuse those of *Shakespear*, or of any other Tragick Poet. For the Sake of the sublime and charming Beauties of their Works, we pass by their Defects. It must be own'd indeed, that the *English* seem to need more Indulgence than the *French*; but, as the Taste of that Nation is not yet quite form'd, greater Allowance is now granted than they can expect some time hence.

Love

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Love is in Possession of the Theatre at *London*, as well as of that at *Paris*: There are few modern Pieces in which it has not a large Share. But, as I observed before, the *English* Poets are not so happy in describing the Springs and Motions of that Passion, as they are in painting Greatness of Soul, Valour, publick Spirit, and such noble Endowments. The Character of *Cato* in *Addison's* Tragedy, is, perhaps, the most beautiful that ever appear'd on the Stage. That of *Pompey* in *Cinna*, that of *Burrhus* in *Britannicus*, nay, even that of *Joash* in *Athaliah*, is not so shining; and yet any one of these Pieces is more perfect than that of the *English* Poet, because he was so weak, in order to please the Fair Sex (who are the chief Judges of the Merit of a Tragedy at *London*, as well as at *Paris*) as to introduce tender Speeches, though he was a Stranger to the soft Language of Love. This has enervated the finest Tragedy that was ever acted upon any Stage.

When the Science of *Sophocles* and *Euripides* arrives at Perfection in *England*, it will be much more difficult for their Poets, than for the *French*, to produce any thing that is excellent, and suitable to the publick Taste of that Nation. The Author will be obliged to treat of certain Subjects, where he can have no Room to display a sparkling Wit, or vigorous Genius. When he has touched the Passions of the Spectators with some impetuous Strokes, when he has made them feel the Effects of Poetick Terror, and ravish'd their Souls with the true Sublime; he is forced still, out of Complaisance to the Ladies and young Gentlemen, to soften and melt their Hearts, by the amorous Complaints of some unfortunate Lover. This last will be the most difficult Part of his Task, and least suited to an *English* Genius.

In

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In *England*, you may hear the Poets reading Lectures of Philosophy, and talking Politicks upon the Stage: They are more careful to maintain the Character of true *Britons*, than that of Citizens of *Parnassus*. In every Performance you may read the *Shibboleth* of a Party.

Adieu, my dear *Isaac*: May Happiness and Contentment attend thee.

London, *****.



LETTER CXLVII.

AARON MONCECA to ISAAC ONIS.

I Observe no such Thing in this Country, my dear *Isaac*, as a Person disappearing all of a sudden, and being carried, by the arbitrary Order of a Minister, to sigh out the Remainder of his Days in a noisom Prison, where none of his Friends shall ever see him. A Citizen of *London* is under no Apprehension of being condemned without a Hearing. They cannot detain a Man in Custody, no not in the Tower, without a formal Process against him. A *Lettre-de-cachet* is a Term neither mentioned nor understood here. Happy Country! where the Innocent are above the Fear of Punishment. No Man, in this Country, needs be afraid of being dragged from his Family, upon the false Accusation of a spiteful Impostor, and deprived of an Opportunity to justify himself, till
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after a tedious Confinement. He has nothing to fear from the Hatred of the Great, or even from the Malice of the Priests themselves. As long as a Man lives an honest and harmless Life, he is under the Protection of the Laws; and till he violates these he is perfectly secure. An *Englishman* needs not give himself the Trouble, every Evening, to recollect what has dropt from him in Conversation thro' the Day, out of Dread, lest some unguarded Expression should cost him two or three Years Liberty. He thinks, he speaks, and acts freely, and is under no Restraint but that of the Law. If a Minister makes a wrong Step, he condemns it openly. As he is a Member of the State, the Law presumes him honest, and therefore permits him to speak his Sentiments freely, on any Subject: The same Law secures him from falling a Victim to the despotick Statesman, whose Power sanctifies his Errors, and gives Authority to his false Measures.

In this Kingdom, they commend the Great, if they have Virtue to deserve it; by the same Rule they censure them, when they have none, or if their good Qualities are less considerable than their bad ones.

If Cardinal *de Fleury* was prime Minister in *England*, all the People of *London* would do Justice to his Character; they would unanimously applaud his extraordinary Abilities, his Prudence, his Integrity, his pacifick Disposition, and his Regard for the Honour of his Master: But if, instead of this great Minister, they had Cardinal *du Bois* at the Helm of their Government, they would not stick, in the most publick Manner, to expose his ill Conduct; his Purple would not hide his Faults, nor the Dignity of his Character set him above deserved Censure. In the Midst of his Grandeur, he discover'd all the Vices of a pedantick
Master

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Master of a College, who had been raised to a Rank as much above his Merit, as his Birth. Whatever Liberty the *English* might think fit to take in exposing such a wicked Minister, he could not punish them with Death; nay, he could not so much as send them into a short Exile. At *Paris*, however, it was a less Crime to violate the most sacred and express Law, than to speak a Word against the Vices of that *Priest*. At this Day the whole Nation condemns him; all Ranks unanimously detest and censure his ill Qualities: They wonder how such a Villain could ever rise to such a Post; and yet, could this Man rise from the Dead, and be again possess'd of Power, most of these, who now declaim against him so freely, would be the first to run and offer him the Incense of Flattery and blind Obedience. The Terror of a *Lettre de Cacquet* for a rash Word would keep them in shameful Slavery.

Unhappy is that State where the People have not Access to the Prince, and are denied the Liberty of informing him of the Faults of his Ministers, and of exhibiting just Complaints against their ill Conduct. It is, beyond all Question, the Interest of the Sovereign not to allow his Ministers too extensive a Power, and frequently to enquire into their Conduct. Princes are often the unhappy Victims of the Blunders committed by those they trust. How happy had it been for *Henry III.* if an honest Courtier had seasonably inform'd him of the Danger into which he was running headlong, thro' a blind Confidence, a wrong placed Affection, and an unreasonable Attachment to his Minions. But such is the Fate of Princes! they stand more in need of Counsel than other Men, and yet few dare presume to give it. Experience confirms the general Opinion, that it is always hazardous, and often fatal, to undeceive
a King.

a King. In case the Advice is favourably receiv'd at first, 'tis ten to one but the Minister will find Means to clear himself; and his Justification is inevitably the Ruin of his Accuser. Sometimes the Minister may save himself the Trouble of a Defence; his Master's Confidence is an impregnable Entrenchment, and whoever presumes to force it, meets with certain Death. Princes and great Men are not above the Power of Prejudice, more than others. It sometimes happens, that illustrious Monarchs fancy their Honour someway concern'd in supporting those they have made Choice of, tho' they are very sensible of their Incapacity for the Posts they fill; witness *Chamillard*, and many others. Since then it is so dangerous for a particular Person at Court, to discover to a Sovereign the important Secrets of his Ministers. Policy seems to require, that Truth should reach the Throne through the Channel of the People. The Prince must be everlastingly imposed upon, if no private Person dares speak, nor the People, in a Body, complain. It is impossible to remove this Mischief, equally fatal to King and Subjects, but by permitting the Publick to speak freely of the Virtues and Vices of those in Power, and by absolutely suppressing what the *French* call *Lettres-de-Câchet*. By this abominable Means, a Minister has it in his Power to inflict an arbitrary Punishment on any Man who presumes to offend him, whether he has done any thing amiss or not.

In this Point, my dear *Isaac*, the *English* Constitution is perfectly right. That can only be call'd Justice, when a Man is punish'd after a fair Trial, and Conviction, by the known Laws of the State. If a Government depart from this plain Rule, it can't but frequently happen that the Innocent will fall a Sacrifice to Calumny and lawless Power.

Behold a late Instance of a very extraordinary Nature !

In the Year 1723, Father *Fouquet*, a *Jesuit*, return'd into *France*, from *China*, where he had been Missionary twenty five Years. Some religious Disputes had embarrass'd him with his Brethren; he had taught several *Chinese* Doctrines, inconsistent with the Rules of that Society, and caused several Memorials to be published, in *Europe*, reflecting upon the whole Order. Two *Chinese* *Literati* came over with him: The one died at Sea, and the other, who arrived safe at *Paris*, was to go to *Rome*, as an Evidence against the holy Fathers whom they left in *China*. *Fouquet*, with his Companion, took up their Lodgings in *St Anthony's* Street; but, however they managed the Affair with the utmost Secresy, the cunning *Jesuites* smell'd their Design; and resolved to traverse it, and be revenged on their Enemies. Father *Fouquet*, being inform'd of what they were about, without losing a Moment's Time, took Post in the Night for *Rome*, together with the *Chinese* Man of Letters. The *Jesuites* pursue them with all Expedition, and unfortunately came up with the Stranger. As this unhappy Man understood not one Word of *French*, the good Fathers applied to Cardinal *Du Bois*, who, at that Time, wanted their Assistance; and, representing the young *Chinese* as a distracted Person, they desire Leave to have him confin'd. The Cardinal, whose Duty it was to have protected him, upon this slight Information, immediately grants them a *Lettre-de-Cachet*, the Thing, in all the World of which he was always liberal. The Lieutenant *de Police*, who was charged with the Execution of this Order, found the Lunatick to be a young Man, who complimented him after the Manner of the *Chinese*: He appeared rather to sing than

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speak, and had something of a disturbed Air. The *French* Officer expressed his Concern for what had befallen him, and sent him to *Charenton*, where he was regularly whipp'd twice a Day, in the same Manner as the *Abbe des Fontaines* * was afterwards at *Biffetre*. The poor *Chinese* could not think enough of the Manner in which the *French* entertained Strangers. He continued three Years in Confinement among a Number of distracted Creatures, who went through the same Course of Discipline with himself. He fancied that the whole *French* Nation was divided into two Classes, one of which had no other Employment but to make the other dance to the Whip. At the End of three Years there happen'd a Change in the Ministry, when the Lieutenant *de Police* was removed. His Successor began his Office with visiting all the Prisons, and among the rest the Mad-house at *Charenton*. After he had examined all the Lunatics who were brought before him, he demanded if there were none left to see? They answered, there was one, but he spoke a Language that no body understood. A certain *Jesuit*, who attended the Magistrate, assured him, that it was the peculiar Madness of this Man never to answer in *French*; he advised him not to give himself the Trouble to call for the Mad-man, since he could get nothing out of him. The Lieutenant, however, did not regard the Reverend Father, but order'd the young Man to be brought out. He presently falls on his Knees to the Magistrate. Several spoke to him in *Spanish*, *Italian*, *Latin*, *Greek*, *English*, &c. but all they could get from him was a constant Repetition of the same Word *Kanton*, *Kanton*. The Father assured them, he was possessed. But the Lieutenant, calling to mind that there was a

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* See this Passage of History in the first Part of the *Savage* *Memoirs of the Republick of Letters*.

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Province in *China* of that Name, imagined he might possibly belong to it; and therefore sent for an Interpreter who spoke the *Chinese* Language; upon which, the whole Secret came out. The Magistrate was at a Loss what to do in the Case; and even a *Jesuit*, for once, was put to the Blush, and knew not what to say. The Duke of *Bourbon*, who was then prime Minister, being acquainted with the Matter, took Care to have the unfortunate *Chinese* clothed and supplied with Money: The first Opportunity that offered, he was sent home to his own Country; from whence, 'tis probable, few Men of Letters will, for the future, venture to make a Voyage to *Rome* in Company with the *Jesuites*.

Thou seest, dear *Isaac*, how basely these *Lettres-de-Cachet* may be abused. How many unhappy Wretches have become Victims to this arbitrary Custom, so utterly inconsistent with all the Rules of common Justice and Equity! If a Bishop has a Picque at one of his inferior Clergy, he has nothing more to do, but represent him to the Court as a *Jansenist*; a *Lettre-de-Cachet* is forthwith sent down, and the poor Man is disposed of for Life. It is quite out of a Man's Power, who is thus banish'd, to justify himself; for he is generally forbid all Correspondence, and sent to end his Days among his sworn Enemies, who, by malicious Calumnies, endeavour to aggravate those imaginary Crimes wherewith he had been charged. How many innocent Persons have been, within the last Century, arrested, and confined in Prisons, for Years together, upon bare Suspicion, or false Accusations. What dreadful Abuse has there been of *Lettres-de-Cachet*! To such a Height is this Evil grown, that private Persons have counterfeited these Mandates: A Criminal was lately hang'd, with this Inscription, in Capital Letters, on his Breast,

Breast, *A FORGER OF LETTRES-DE-CACHET.*

'Tis ridiculous to alledge, in Vindication of this tyrannical Practice, the absolute Power of Kings, or the Necessity of securing some suspected Persons without a legal Trial. Both these Arguments are equally false. Princes ought, for their own Sakes, to set the People an Example of doing every thing according to Law. Besides, if they are Masters of their Subjects, they are likewise, at least they ought to be, their Fathers; and Equity forbids to authorize a Custom, which leaves the weaker entirely at the Mercy of the more powerful, and puts it in the Power of one Man to oppress all the rest with Impunity.

If Security could be given, that all succeeding Ministers in *France* would be as wise and just as the present, the Prince might, very safely, trust them with the Execution of his whole Authority, without Reserve. He might depend upon it, that all Things would be so manag'd as to render the Subject happy. The People would have so little Reason to dread any Tyranny or Injustice, that they would become sensible that *Lettres de Cachet* are Acts of Lenity, serving only to screen People from the Severity of the Law. But for one Cardinal *de Fleury*, there are thirty Cardinals *du Bois*. It is therefore highly unjust, that the People should be exposed to the Caprice of a Man, who abuses the Power his Sovereign has invested him with; or that the Liberty and Property of particular Persons should depend upon the Credit and Interest their Enemies have with a prime Minister.

It is the proper Office of Kings to administer Justice impartially to all their Subjects, and to take Care that the meanest be not oppressed by the Great. It is absolutely necessary, for this Purpose, that every Man have Liberty to bring in

his Defence before he be condemned ; and that he be tried by impartial Judges.

Observe one Thing, my dear *Isaac*, the Minister is commonly, I may say, always, an Enemy to those who are punished by *Lettres-de-Catchet* : Now should a Man be both Judge and Party in the same Cause? What would the World say of a Court of Justice, that, on the Attorney General's winding up his Harangue against the Prisoners, should order them to be carried to Execution, without allowing them to speak one Word in their own Defence? Would not all Mankind cry Shame on such a partial Deference to the Opinion of one Man? What is a Minister, but a Justice of Peace, though of an higher Order? If therefore he punish those who offend against the Laws, he ought, in so doing, to observe the Law himself, and to punish them no otherwise than it directs.

Fatal have been the Effects of ill Ministers! What Murders, Bloodshed and Misery, have they scattered through Nations! This should make Kings act with Caution in the Power they indulge them with, and take Care that they never exceed the Bounds of Justice in the Execution of it. It would be hard to determine whose Interest is most concerned; whether the King's or the Subjects, in having the Laws observed, and Justice exactly administered. If the People are afraid of the despotick Power of a prime Minister, the Sovereign has no less Cause to be alarm'd, if he reflect on the Consequences of such a Power. If a King did but know how much he is indebted to those who sometimes oppose the Measures of evil Ministers; far from allowing them to be oppressed, he would esteem them his best Friends, and make use of their Counsels.

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Though, at the same Time, it can't be denied, that, let a Minister be ever so good, there will be a Party of factious Malecontents to misrepresent his best Actions, and thwart his wisest Schemes for the publick Good: But these are not the People whom Kings ought to regard. When I speak of a Prince's listning to private Informations, I mean only such as come from Persons of known Probity, and well affected to the Government. It would be Madness to expect, that a King should lend an Ear to the Murmurs and Clamour of every seditious and designing Man. This indeed is the opposite Extreme, and equally dangerous with the other; for it is certain the greatest Merit cannot vanquish Envy, or stop the Mouth of Malice.

Cardinal *de Fleury* will, I doubt not, be more respected by Posterity than Cardinal *Richelieu*; at least, I am sure, the judicious and unprejudiced Part of Mankind will allow him preferable to all the Ministers *France* ever produced. In the mean time, this doth not hinder several, at this Day, from being Fools enough, or Knaves enough, not to acknowledge his great Virtues.

Sir *Robert Walpole*, who is prime Minister here, is a Gentleman of great Capacity; he has a vast, penetrating, and sublime Genius, and is no less solicitous for the Good of his Country, than concern'd for the Honour of his Prince. He supports, with wonderful Ability, and consummate Prudence, the whole Weight of publick Affairs. By his wise Administration, he has advanced the Trade and Credit of the Nation to the highest Pitch; however, Multitudes are daily exclaiming against him. He has indeed more Enemies than the *French* Cardinal: But, notwithstanding this impotent Clamour, not only the thinking People in *England*, but all *Europe* in general, do Justice to his Capacity, and acknowledge his uncommon Merit. It is

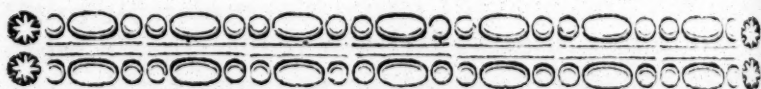
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is very probable his Enemies would blame him less, if his Qualifications were not so conspicuous.

A Thought is just now come into my Head, while I am Writing: If, by any Accident, this Letter should miscarry, and fall into the Hands of an *English* Malecontent, he'd swear it was not for nought that I commended Sir *Robert*; he would never bring himself to believe, that I, a *Jew*, a Stranger in *England*, and wholly unknown at Court, could speak well of a Man, merely because I think he deserves it,

I conclude, dear *Isaac*, with my best Wishes to thee.

London, *****.



LETTER CXLVIII.

JACOB BRITO to AARON MONCECA.

BAD Weather, and contrary Winds, my dear *Monceca*, have hindred my embarking. It is with the greatest Impatience that I wait the happy Moment, when I shall leave this inhospitable Country. Notwithstanding my Disguise, and all the Precautions I take, I can't help being under great Uneasiness. I am terrified to consider the insatiable Avarice of the Monks; I tremble to think of their exorbitant Power in this Place; and yet, excessive as it is, 'tis nothing comparable to

what

what it has been in Times past. Judge then to what a Height this Priestly Power may be carried, and with what Insolence and Cruelty it is often exercised.

There happened, two or three Days ago, in this City, an Adventure very mortifying to the Priests. The Jailor and Guards of the Prison belonging to the Bishop's Court committed all Sorts of Crimes; they robbed, they beat, they abused the Prisoners: The greatest Criminals were best used, provided they had Money, and were generous. The *Corregidor*, or Governor of the City hearing of these Disorders, caused the Jailor and some of his Crew to be arrested and confined in the common Prison. Upon this the Patriarch took Fire, believing that his Honour was concern'd to support these Villains, who only did his Drudgery. He therefore excommunicated the *Corregidor*, as convicted of the most atrocious Crime. The Magistrate resented the Affront, and appeal'd to the King for Redress. His Majesty easily apprehended, that the Indignity offered to the Governor reflected on the Throne itself, and that the Royal Authority was wounded through his Sides; and therefore gave him all the Satisfaction he could desire. The Pontiff was fain to revoke the Sentence of Excommunication, and wrote a very submissive Letter to the *Corregidor*, begging Pardon for his Rashness.

This Conduct of the King, which, in other Countries, would be reckoned no more than common Justice, is look'd upon here, at *Lisbon*, as a bold Stroke, an Action worthy of the bravest Hero. The *French* can't be more proud of the Trophy which *Lewis XIV.* caused to be erected in the Midst of *Rome*, than the wiser Part in *Portugal* are of this Action, so honourable for the King, so equitable for the Magistrates, and so mortifying to the Clergy. Nor will we think this strange, if

if we consider the different Character of the *French* and *Portuguese*. It was not more difficult for the grand Monarch to humble the Pope, than for the King of *Portugal* to tame the Pride of a Patriarch, who is rever'd as a kind of Deity by the most part of his Subjects.

Whenever, at *Paris*, the Sovereign is disposed to thwart the Measures of the Court of *Rome*, all Things concur to favour his Design. The Parliament is infinitely pleased to see its sworn Enemy humbled: Nay, even many Ecclesiasticks bless the Hand that protects the Liberties of the *Gallican* Church. The People know not how to express their Gratitude for the Preservation of their Rights. And as for the Grandees, they are the eternal Slaves of the Court; and would have the Complaisance to turn *Mahometans*, if the King took a Fancy to wear a Turban: They are mere Weather-cocks, and can go to Bed *Molinists*, and rise *Jansenists*, as their Interest directs them: This is the Rule of their Faith. If Circumcision was the Way to Preferment, we should soon have Brethren enough at Court.

In *Portugal*, People have a quite different Way of Thinking: The Priests, the Monks, and the Inquisitors, are all concerned to support the Authority of their Chief; do but touch him, and you have the whole Tribe about your Ears. The Laity, in general, are such arrant Bigots, that, instead of opposing the Encroachments of the Clergy, they are ready, with profound Respect, to kiss their very Chains; such Slaves to Superstition, that they never make a Distinction between Religion and the Priests: Thus, being equally blind in their Opinions and Conduct, they are easily wrought up to the highest Pitch of Enthusiasm. In case, therefore, the King should form a Design to humble the Pride, and abridge the Power of the aspiring Clergy,

Clergy, he would be supported by none, but those few who are above the Power of Prejudice, and have the Courage to make use of that Reason which God has given them. It is true, that amongst these we may commonly reckon Persons of Birth, who, by their Education and Knowledge of the World, can see further than others into the Tricks of Monks and Avarice of Churchmen. But, however powerful this Aid may seem, 'tis nothing comparable to the Advantage a *French* King has in executing the same Design. The same Degree of Resolution is necessary to effect the least Matter, where the Clergy are concern'd, at *Lisbon*, as would perform the most heroick Exploit, and make a Man immortal, at *Paris*.

The present King of *Portugal* has had several Bickerings with the Court of *Rome*, and with more Success than any of his Predecessors. Happy for himself and his Kingdom! He is not a Slave to Priests; he listens to the Counsel of true Patriots, and, which is more, he follows it.

The Misfortunes which *Don Sebastian* drew upon himself, by his blind Submission to the Monks, should be a Warning to all the future Kings of *Portugal*. That unfortunate Prince ruin'd himself by yielding to the Importunity of some *Jesuites* he had about him, who persuaded him to hazard a Battle with the *Moors*, though they had thrice his Numbers. The Reverend Fathers promised him miraculous Assistance; but alas! they were not so good as their Word: And the poor unhappy Prince paid down his Life for his Weakness and Credulity. A severe, but just, Correction, for giving himself up to the Direction of Priests, in Matters so remote from their Profession.

The Fate of *Don Sebastian* was so much the more deplorable, that many thought the *Jesuites* intended, by their Advice, to destroy him. However,

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ever, this Fact is not very certain; yet many Historians make no Scruple to assert it. *Some there are, says Brantome*, who assure us, that the Jesuites acted with a good Intention; others are no less positive, that they were corrupted by the King of Spain, to push on that young and brave Prince to his Ruin; that his Dominions might fall an easy Prey to his ambitious Neighbours.*

If my Opinion be asked with respect to this Dispute, I must frankly own, that I can't determine which Side has the greatest Probability. It may be alledged, that this is only an imaginary Crime charged on the *Jesuites* by their Enemies, nor can it be denied that there are many such: On the other Hand, it may be insinuated, that 'tis likely enough, that the *Jesuites*, so much devoted to the King of *Spain*, should take this wicked Step to put him in Possession of Dominions he had already swallowed in Imagination. In this Case, they did no more than really act, what they basely endeavoured to bring to pass in *France*, in the Times of the League.

Don *Sebastian* is not the only Monarch, who has lost both Crown and Life through the pernicious Counsels of Priests. *Lewis* King of *Hungary* was slain in a Battle against the *Turks*, which was resolved upon in consequence of the Persuasions of a certain Cardinal, by whom he was entirely guided. A *French* King, of the same Name, by the Solicitation of the Clergy, was hurried into a bloody and expensive War; and having marched into *Africa*, at the Head of a brave Army, he buried himself, and more than Half of his Men, in the Ruins of *Carthage*.

No greater Mischief can possibly befall a Prince, than to give himself up to a Set of Men, whose want of Experience makes them ignorant, and

* *Dames Galantes*, Tome II. Page 88.

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whose false Zeal and Bigotry makes them mad. A Man who has Capacity enough to manage thirty Devotees, is not therefore fit to govern a Kingdom. States and Convents are two very different Things: And yet how often have we seen the Sovereign cringing at the Feet of his Confessor, and learning of him the Arts of Government, till, at last, the mighty Monarch has become the mere Organ of a despicable Monk. Even among Protestants, where the Clergy pretend to keep within their own Province, there are but too many for directing their Masters. What amazing and unexpected Alterations, not only in the Government of *England*, but in the Affairs of the grand Alliance, were produced by the seditious Sermons of one *Sacheverel*? In the neighbouring Nation, we have seen another incendiary Preacher, of tolerable Parts for a *Norman*, giving himself the Air of a little Minister of State. And, is it not certain, that these political Gospellers seldom fail to become popular.

Happy, my dear *Monceca*, the Prince who makes a right Choice of his Favourites! Upon this alone the Peace and Honour of his Government depend. How many Monarchs, fam'd in History, owe the Figure they have made entirely to their Ministers of State? The glorious Epithet of *Great*, bestow'd on the Prince, belongs, many times, more properly to his Minister. But for *Agrippa* and *Mecenas*, in what Rank must we have placed *Augustus*? The History of *Lewis XIII.* what is it, but Memoirs of the glorious Actions of Cardinal *Richelieu*? *Lewis XIV.* was indeed a great Man, but the *Condes*, the *Turennes*, the *Louvois*, and *Colberts*, share with him the Glories of his Reign. The now reigning Monarch of *France* has a thousand Virtues to recommend him to the Esteem of remotest Ages. He possesses all that Sweetness

and good Nature, that Wisdom and Piety, which made *Titus* the *Darling of Mankind*. Notwithstanding these good Qualities, his Majesty will frankly acknowledge his infinite Obligation to that wise Minister he has chosen to direct his Counsels. If *Burrhus* and *Seneca* had not been succeeded by the cruel *Narcissus*, *Nero* might have been always virtuous. It was the Minions of *Henry III.* who misled and ruin'd that unhappy Prince.

In all Conditions of Life, vicious Favourites are dangerous; but they are most so to Kings. A private Man will find a thousand Friends to reproach him with his Folly, and warn him of the Danger to which bad Advice has expos'd him. But 'tis quite otherwise with a King; fawning Courtiers generally commend whatever he does, be it ever so bad; so that he must never be undeceived, unless by the seasonable Remonstrance of some faithful Friend, who is permitted to speak his Mind freely. There are but few Princes, 'tis true, so wise as to take this Course; but 'tis as true, that there are few Princes who don't fall into very great Errors: And the worst of it is, these Faults fall heavy upon their Subjects; a Multitude of innocent People, who had not the least Share in the Guilt, must bear all the Punishment. Bad Kings are the severest Scourges of a Nation. The Plague is not so destructive to Mankind as the boundless Ambition of Princes. Dearth and Famine can't reduce a Country so low, as the Vanity and Luxury of a Prince, who oppresses his Subjects to enrich a flattering Courtier, or reward a faithless Mistress. Storms, Earthquakes and Inundations, are more harmless Things than the Extravagance of Kings, and the large Pensions employ'd to corrupt the Ministers of their Neighbours.

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Happy those Nations where the Kings are a sort of tutelar Deities, and study nothing but how to promote the publick Happiness, without expecting any other Temple or Worship, but the Hearts of their Subjects. Such was the Conduct of those renown'd Monarchs of Antiquity, who were born for the Good of Mankind, and after they were dead, had divine Honours paid to their Memory. Those Heroes, who placed all their Greatness in the Good they did to others, what would they say if they saw a King laying the Foundation of his Glory in Murder and Devastation, acquiring the pompous Title of *Grand*, by destroying a whole Country? What would they think, if they heard another stiled *Magnificent* for impoverishing his Subjects? and a third called *intrepid*, for his Delight in Slaughter? Sure they would judge those Titles very much misplaced.

Farewel, my dear *Monceca*. May the God of our Fathers make thee prosperous.

Lisbon, *****.





LETTER CXLIX.

AARON MONCECA to ISAAC ONIS.

SOMETIME ago, my dear *Isaac*, I wrote thee my Sentiments of the *English* Tragedy, and shall now make some Remarks on the Comic Writers of this Nation. These latter Authors seem to exceed the former by much. I went Yesterday to a Comedy, and was well entertain'd with the Performance. The Characters were natural, the Plot well laid, the Stile chaste; and, which was of infinitely greater Consequence, the Moral was just, and conveyed to us with great Art, and a good deal of Humour. This Piece was written by *Congreve*, the best, the wisest, and most modest of all the *English* Poets in this Way. It had been well, if *Wycherley* and *Vanbrugh* had copied after this Pattern: Their Plays are indeed full of Spirit, and abound with Wit; but too often they offend the modest Ear, and make the Stage an Engine of Corruption; whereas it ought to be the School of Morals.

It bears no Dispute with me, that *Moliere's* Comedies are far superior to the best of *Wycherley's* Productions. Not to insist upon their inimitable Delicacy, they preserve the just Decorum necessary to secure all publick Entertainments from the

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Zeal of those squeamish Doctors, who are ever labouring to ruin their Credit.

The best Argument we can use in Defence of the Stage, is, its Usefulness to advance Morality. The modern Plays are certainly adorn'd with fine Thoughts, and afford us many instructive Lessons. Few People of Figure care to hear Sermons, but they are generally good Customers to the Play-house; and I may venture to say, that the Courtiers have been more edified by *Moliere's* Comedies, than by all the good Sermons of *Bourdalone* or *Maffillon*.

Do but reflect, my dear *Isaac*, how much Service was done by that single Comedy, *Precieuses ridicules*? This Play corrected the Stiffness and Affectation of *French* Manners, and polish'd their Language. But if we remove from the Stage that Modesty which is essential to good Manners; if, instead of amending the Heart, while we please the Fancy, we do our utmost to corrupt both, by drawing a fine Picture of Vice, as in all the scurrilous Performances of *Dancour*, and others of the same Stamp; whatever Strength of Genius may appear in the Execution of such a mischievous Design, these Authors do but poison the Publick; and only endeavour to render their mortal Draughts palatable, that they may go down with more Ease.

Wycherley seems to have been at pains to collect all the Subjects capable of admitting a criminal Intrigue; he has even forced one upon those which could scarce admit of it. Whatever Pieces he borrowed from *Moliere*, he has corrupted, to suit his own vitiated Taste. The Comedy form'd on the Model of *Moliere's Ecole des Femmes*, tho' full of Fire and sparkling Wit, comes far short of its Original. *Moliere* makes the future Husband only hazard his Spouse's Fidelity, and is

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very careful to avoid every Expression that may break in upon Decency; whereas *Wycherley* introduces a pretended Eunuch, telling all the World of his Impotency: The Husbands, glad to find so safe a Guardian, readily commit their Wives to his Charge. The false *Origen*, having pitched on a certain youthful Lady, obtains of her the last Favours. 'Tis, without doubt, happy for the Spectators, that the Comic Writers in *England* are somewhat more delicate than the Tragic Poets, otherwise a very scandalous Scene would be exhibited in that very Play: And yet, it would be no more shocking in its Kind, than to introduce, in a Tragedy *, a Husband strangling his Wife with his own Hands. This fine Sight the *English* can behold, not only without Horror, but even with Admiration.

If we condemn the *English* Tragedy Writers, for transgressing the Rules of that Art; the Comic Poets are no less culpable, for offending against Modesty and good Manners. The latter are indeed more perfect in their Way. *Wycherley* and *Vanbrugh* come nearer to *Terence* and *Moliere*, than *Dryden* and *Shakespear* do to *Euripides* and *Sophocles*, or even to *Corneille* and *Racine*. Sometimes indeed we meet, in their Works, with bolder Strokes than in the *Latin* and *French* Poets; but these Strokes want Delicacy, and their Lustre is obscured by whole Periods, where the Author seems quite lost to all Modesty.

Congreve's Comedies are, by far, the best that the *English* have. This Poet is worthy to rival the great *Moliere*. Indeed he hath fewer Faults than the *Frenchman*. His Plays are exact, full of Life, and conducted with just Prudence: He is cautious in his Expressions, and never has Recourse to ridiculous and low Humour to raise a Laugh

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* The Moor of *Venice*.

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He is well acquainted with Mankind; all his Characters are true, natural and bright. If the *English* Comedies were generally as perfect as his, the Theatre of *London* would surpass that of *Paris*: But *Congreve* has written but few Plays himself, and there are not many of his Brethren who come near him.

The meaner of the Comic Authors in this Country have a Custom pleasant enough. They pillage *Moliere*; nay, more, they disfigure him; nay, more still, they have the Insolence to criticise his best Pieces without Mercy. This Poet has no better Quarter in *England*, than *Homer*, *Virgil*, *Horace*, &c. amongst the Adversaries of the Ancients. All your Smatterers in Poetry form a Body to attack him, at the same time when they are putting off their own miserable Performances by the Help of some bright Sentiments stolen from him.

'Tis true, if *Moliere* was to be tried by the Appearance he makes in these plagiary Scrapes, he would be cast without Appeal. But how impotent are all the Sallies of these wretched Blotters of Paper? Can the Authors of a few miserable Farces blast the Reputation of a Poet, establish'd in the Opinion of every Person of Taste?

I am assur'd, my dear *Isaac*, that *Congreve* always professed the highest Esteem of *Moliere*; indeed never did any *English* Poet of Note decry his Works. It is impossible that any judicious Man should be such a Slave to Prejudice, as not to discern the Delicacy, the Wit, the good Sense, which prevails in his *Tartuffe*, his *Misanthrope*, his *Ecole des Femmes*, and his *Femmes Savantes*. Did ever *Corneille* or *Racine* attempt to criticise *Sophocles* or *Euripides*? On the contrary, they bestowed upon them the highest Encomiums. *Boileau* and *Pope* stand up zealously for the Honour

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of *Homer* and *Virgil*. It is not to be wondered at, that the *Peraults*, the *Terrassons*, and such pitiful Authors, should form the ridiculous Design to fully the Glory of these ancient Heroes of *Par-nassus*. *Scarron*, *d'Affouci* and *Merivaux*, who endeavour'd to burlesque *Virgil*, *Ovid*, and *Fenelon*, are incomparably more innocent; for, however they drew but bad Copies, yet they never had a mean Thought of their Originals.

It seems necessary, in order to establish a Character in the learned World, that an Author be attack'd by these paltry Writers, the very Scum and Excrement of Letters.

I know not, *Isaac*, if ever thou reflected on the Number of bad Books written against the most reputed Authors. There is not one, however, that has escaped; and their Adversaries have censured them with the same Assurance, as if they had been taking to task the Works of *Bonaccorse* or *Pradon*.

Not to mention the impertinent *Parallel between the Ancients and Moderns*, in which the Author has laboured more to depreciate the *Greek* and *Latin* Classics, than to demonstrate an Equality between the Age of *Augustus* and that of *Lewis le Grande*; how many dull and wretched Criticisms have been published on the Tragedies of *Corneille*, *Racine*, *Crebillon*, and *Voltaire*? 'Tis true, these Pieces are generally admired, while the Animadversions upon them are despised and forgot; yet 'tis equally true, that such Censures were once published, and found Fools enough to applaud them.

Was there not a large *Folio* publish'd against *Bayle's Dictionary*? Indeed, Men of Learning express'd the greatest Contempt of the Book: But this did not hinder others of no Taste to approve, and buy up this dull Piece. Such Pretenders to

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Letters are like Mules, who make no Difference, but carry every thing that is laid upon 'em. Their indigested Collections are not so properly *Bibliothèques*, as *Bibliotaphs*, if I may be allow'd to coin a Word, to express a Place where a Multitude of Books lie buried.

A silly Monk * had the Impudence, to publish a Dissertation against the *Characters of la Bruyere*. Some Num-sculls had the Patience to read it; and others of the same Stamp would still vouchsafe it the same Honour, if the Translator of *Locke* had not taken the Pains to expose the Weakness and Absurdity of that Critick.

Montaigne, for some time after his Death, sustained a great deal of ill Humour from the *Jansenists*. But this Author is as much read and admired as ever, while the Criticks would be absolutely forgot, had not the Publisher of the last Edition of his *Essays* taken notice of them in the Preface.

Dr *Stillingfleet* wrote against *Locke*; but 'tis happy for the World, that his Criticism was never translated out of *English*; so that 'tis scarce known abroad; otherwise there are not wanting Fools enough to admire it.

This Treatment of the most glorious Monuments of Learning, inclines me to reckon it a Mark of a good Book, that it has been criticiz'd. If in this I am right, it must be allow'd, that the Journalists *de Trevoux* have done great Service, not only to the Works of the *Jansenists*, but also to those of the Protestants, and, in short, of all the Adversaries of the *Jesuites*, amongst whom they will not allow so much as one tolerable Writer. In order to make Reprisals, I wonder the *Jansenists* don't think of laying aside the senseless and heavy Paper called *Novelles Ecclesiastiques*,
and

* A *Carthusian*, under the fictitious Name of *Vigneul-Marville*,

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and of setting up some Literary Journal, where-
in they might criticize, without Mercy, the best
Performances of *Petau*, *Sirmond*, *Bourdaloue*, *de*
la Rue, *Daniel*, &c. and cry up to the Skies the
Works of some contemptible Authors, whose on-
ly Merit is Party Rage and Zeal against the Je-
suitical Order. Without Question, they have been
discouraged from this Design, by the ill Recep-
tion of the *Journal de Trevoux*. They can't but
observe how little Regard is paid to the Criticisms
of that *Molinist* Journal; and hence they conclude
what must be the Fate of a *Jansenist* Collection,
form'd on the same Model. They have therefore
thought it more adviseable to publish a Weekly
Sheet, suited to the Genius and Taste of the Vul-
gar. Happy 'tis for them, that their Adversaries
have ruined their Credit by carrying Matters too
far, otherwise they had been very unequally match-
ed. Persons of Candour are offended at both
Parties, when they plainly discover, that they are
equally animated by Fury and Resentment.

To speak Truth, my dear *Isaac*, when we con-
sider coolly what passes in the *Republick of Let-*
ters, we must be provok'd to see how little Sin-
cerity prevails, and how much Partiality and In-
justice is practis'd by the Learned, in their Re-
marks and Criticisms on the Works of their Ad-
versaries.

Take care of thy Health, my Friend; and ne-
ver concern thyself with captious and angry Dis-
putants.

*London, *****.*

LETTER



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LETTER CL.

AARON MONCECA to ISAAC ONIS.

THE greatest Philosophers, my dear *Isaac*, fall sometimes into the same Errors and Absurdities with which they reproach their Adversaries. They forget the Principles upon which they establish their own Arguments, and whereby they demolish Scholastick Chimeras. They advance, in their Turn, Notions as extraordinary, and attempt to explain Things as unaccountable; so that one may retort on themselves their Criticisms on certain Authors, whom they affect to treat with infinite Contempt, for these very Faults of which they themselves are guilty.

For Instance, let us observe *Mallebranche* severely censuring the bold and ill founded Decisions of *Aristotle*. Sure, says he, *one must have a strong Faith to believe Aristotle, when he advances nothing but Logical Proofs, and when he explains the Effects of Nature no otherwise than by the confused Notions of Sense; especially when he decides positively on Questions which seem above the Reach of human Understanding. He therefore takes Care to tell us plainly, we must take his Word for what he asserts; it being a Maxim with this Author, that a Disciple ought to believe**.

Who could imagine, my dear *Isaac*, that a Philosopher, who condemns so expressly such as advance

* *Mallebranche, Recherche de la verite, Livre II. Page 18.*

vance Opinions which they can neither prove nor explain, would himself decide Magisterially on the Origin of Evil, and explain Philosophically the Justice of God, in the Damnation of Children. For thou must know, that some *Nazarenes* believe, that all Infants, who die before they go through a certain Ceremony, resembling our Circumcision, are inevitably miserable to all Eternity.

If *Mallebranche* had only said, what every Man of Sense ought to say, that he submitted his Reason to the Faith of those Mysteries which his Church obliged him to believe; if he had declared, that he thought Infants, dying without Baptism, would be damn'd; not because Reason told him so, but because Revelation had made it an Article of Faith; he might have merited Commendation for knowing how to set Bounds to his Curiosity. But, instead of this, he has gone further than ever *Aristotle* did; he has said more extravagant Things, and attempted to explain more inscrutable Mysteries, in four Lines, than the *Greek* Philosopher did in his whole System of Physicks.

Behold, dear *Isaac*, the pompous Jargon, by which *Mallebranche* would prove it consistent with Divine Justice, to punish an Infant, for a Crime to which it was no way accessory. *A Mother*, says our sage Philosopher, *having her Brain full of Impressions made by sensible Objects, and which can't efface by reason of the Concupiscence yet dwelling in her, and giving Strength to carnal Appetites, communicates these to her Child, whom she brings forth a Sinner, though she herself may be righteous. The Mother is righteous, because she actually loves God by a voluntary Choice; neither doth Concupiscence render her guilty, though she may have followed its Motions in her Sleep. But the Infant in her Womb having never loved God by Choice, nor ever had*
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any *Motions of Heart* towards him, is evidently in a corrupt and blind State, nor is there any thing in it but what deserves his *Wrath* *. All this sublime Fustian may be reduced to this single Point: A Mother brings forth a Sinner, because she communicates to it the Concupiscence of which she is guilty. She hath, however, a Power of saving herself, by making use of Reason and loving God: Whereas her Child deserves to be damn'd, for want of this Faculty and Power of loving God.

Now, is not this a curious Chain of Arguments, founded on fine Principles? I will, for once, personate old *Aristotle*, whom *Mallebranche* has so grievously insulted. And tell me, *Monsieur*, would I say to the French Metaphysician, who taught you that a Mother could communicate to an Infant, incapable of Reflection, concupiscent Desires, which expose it to eternal Misery? What Proof can you bring, that a just God will punish a harmless Infant for a Fault committed without its Knowledge, and also through a fatal Necessity? If you'll assert, that an Infant in the Womb can resist the Impressions it receives from the Mother, pray tell me how? If, on the other hand, you must own, that it is utterly incapable of Resistance, by the general Laws of Nature; is it not absurd to say, that it ought to be punished for doing what it could not possibly avoid? I should rather choose to say, that a Child becomes a Sinner by sucking the Milk of a Nurse who is a Sinner. This Doctrine is not quite so repugnant to common Sense; because this Guilt may be avoided, but the other cannot: 'Tis possible a Child may live without sucking, but not without feeling the *Motions* of the Mother, while it remains in her Womb.

Is not this, my dear *Isaac*, a rare Way of explaining the Origin of Evil? What would the ancient Greek Philosophers say to the French Criticks,

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* *Mallebranche* ibidem Livre II. Chap. vii. Page 98.

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ticks, who have been so liberal of their Censures to others, while they themselves account for Original Sin no otherwise than a Physician doth for Blemishes and Marks of the Body?

The Conclusion drawn by *Mallebranche* is yet more absurd than the Premises: For, after having shewn the Manner how Children become Criminals, he concludes, that because they want a Power of knowing God, and consequently of seeing their Faults and repenting, therefore it is just they should be damn'd.

Can there be any thing so ridiculous, any thing so repugnant to right Notions of God, as to suppose that he will punish such of his Creatures as have not only no Power to avoid Sin, or to repent for it after 'tis committed; but, which is much worse, have really no Use of Reason, and act only by Instinct? For I can scarce imagine Father *Mallebranche* so sanguine, as to assert, that a Child in the Womb should be as learn'd a Doctor of the *Sorbonne*, and know, *that a Creature who loves not God by a Love of Choice, and whose Heart is not turned towards God, is in a State of Blindness and Corruption, and that there is nothing in such an one but what deserves the Wrath of God.* An Infant is ignorant of all this for many Years after 'tis born; much less can it have any such Idea in the Womb. If then it has no Manner of Notion of Good or Evil, and if the Soul, tho' a Spirit, acts no otherwise in the Body than that Faculty of Vegetation in a Plant, is it not a monstrous Absurdity to say, that it ought to be punished for Sensations received from the Matter which serves for its Nourishment?

When I hear some *Nazarene* Doctors accounting philosophically for the Damnation of Infants, I fancy to myself so many Fools arguing with a Gentleman for the cutting down and grubbing up all his

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Orange Trees, because the Gardener, who planted them, had done something amiss. Indeed a Man of Learning must make a very silly Figure, when, by the dark Lanthorn of Reason, he would cast Light upon Matters of pure Revelation. This obliges us to believe Mysteries: Let us then believe them implicitly, without attempting to give Reasons which commonly render them incredible, by making them appear absurd.

This Advice, I allow, is liable to a very specious Objection. *If we ought, says one, blindly to submit to every thing revealed, there is nothing but may be supported by the pretended Authority of Revelation. In all Religions, the Jewish, the Nazarene, the Mahometan, the greatest Absurdities will be received. Do not our Rabbies, the Nazarene Divines, and the Turkish Musties and Dervises, plead Revelation for their most ridiculous Chimeras?* To this I answer, that we ought first to examine carefully, whether a Thing has certainly been reveal'd or not; but being once thoroughly assured of this, there remains no more Room for Doubts about it.

When I say, that a Jew should submit his Reason to Revelation, I don't mean that he ought to receive all the whimsical Notions of the Rabbies into his Creed: If Man attempt to impose upon him an Error, let him, as soon as he has discovered, reject it. But as to Doctrines and Facts recorded in Scripture, when he is satisfied of their Authenticity, he must humble himself to receive them implicitly, without pretending to explain divine Mysteries by human Reason. He must not imitate the presumptuous Folly of *Mullebranche*, if he would not share the just Reproaches thrown upon that vain Philosopher.

But to return to where I set out: Is it not astonishing, that so great a Genius, a first Rate Schol-

lar, who sees clearly the Mistakes of another Author, should, nevertheless, fall immediately into the very same Errors, without perceiving that he acted contrary to his own Principles. Such deplorable Blindness is a strong Proof of the Weakness of human Understanding, and of that unreasonable Prejudice a Man is apt to conceive for himself. He imagines there is nothing above his Capacity: He fancies himself able to unravel the deepest Mysteries, at the same time that he severely censures others for attempting to explain 'em. Most of the modern Philosophers, especially the Metaphysicians, have done nothing but added new Mistakes to those they received from the Ancients, and for which they insult them grossly. The same Treatment they themselves will probably meet with from their Successors, who will, perhaps, likewise fall into the same Condemnation, and encrease still further the Doubts and Uncertainties with which Philosophy is incumbered.

To me it seems, that the bloody Criticisms, wherewith the Philosophers lash one another, are the just Punishment of their common Pride. I am the more inclined to be of this Opinion, when I observe, that, in proportion to the Vanity of any Author, he is usually treated with Contempt by his Adversaries. *Aristotle* has met with no better Quarter of late than *Cotin*, or *Pradon*. The *Cartesians* have carried their Resentment to Excess; they condemn all the Works of the *Greek* Philosopher, without distinguishing between the good and the bad. If the famous Preceptor of *Alexander* was to return to the World, he would be thunderstruck to see his once admired Works now despised by all, except a few silly Monks. It might, however, afford him some Consolation, to observe the same Fate attending his two great Antagonists, *Descartes* and *Mallebranche*, the Credit of whose Works

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is sinking every Day. The Wisdom, the Candour, and Penetration of *Locke*, has captivated all the wiser part of the Logicians and Metaphysicians. The great *Newton* has drawn the Admiration of all who study natural Philosophy. The uncommon Modesty with which these two Philosophers have deliver'd their Opinions, will secure them from Envy and Reproach. Accept, dear *Isaac*, of my best Wishes for thy Prosperity.

*London, *****.*



LETTER CLI.

AARON MONCECA to ISAAC ONIS.

I HAD the good Fortune, my dear *Isaac*, to meet with the Cabalitt, here in *England*, with whom I became acquainted at *Hamburgh*. After a few Compliments on his Arrival, I begged he would allow me the Honour of conversing with him now and then, during his Stay at *London*. I agree, said he, *with all my Heart, to the Proposal; and promise not to conceal from you any Mystery of our Art*. Charmed with his Frankness, and with the Prospect of having an Opportunity to judge of the Consequence of that Science, I thanked him in the kindest Manner. *I am willing, said he, to begin this very Day to explain to you the Principles of Hermetick Philosophy. Let us go take a Walk in some private Place, to prevent Interruption.* I readily

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dily followed my new Master, and we both sat down in the Corner of a publick Garden, but little frequented with Company.

We had scarce taken our Seats, when the Cabalist, with Eyes lifted up to Heaven, kept a profound Silence for some Minutes, and seem'd wrapt up in Contemplation. Coming to himself again, he fetched a deep Sigh, and asked me if I had never read any Books treating of their Art? I answered, that I had read several, but found them so mysterious, that I for ever despair'd of comprehending their Sense. At these Words my Cabalist fetched another Sigh. "Behold, said he, the sad Effects of Man's Wickedness! the Sages are obliged to veil the Truth, and conceal the vast Treasures of their Knowledge even from good Men, for fear the wicked and profane should meddle with it. All the learned Enquirers into Nature have been forced to write so obscurely, that it is simply impossible to penetrate their Meaning, without the Assistance of the Holy Spirit, or of some Master of the Art. These illustrious Philosophers profess, that they don't write but for the beloved Scholars of the golden Doctrine*. *Agmon*, the great *Agmon*, towards the End of the *Turb*†, speaks to this Purpose: *If we had not multiplied the technical Terms in our sublime Science, even Children, at this Day, would profane and make a Jest of it. And if I, says the renowned Rasis, was to reveal its Mysteries, there would be no Difference between the learned and*

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* See the Introduction to the School of the transmutatory metallick Philosophy, by *David de Planis Campy* Page 1.

† The *Turb* is a Collection of Visions ascribed to the ancient Philosophers, whom they suppose to have been acquainted with the Art of making Gold. Among whom they reckon *Aristotle*, *Socrates*, and *Pythagoras*. In this Book also are contained all the ridiculous Fancies of the Cabalists. In short, it may be called the *Alcoran* or *Talmud* of the Artists.

“ the Ignorant. Almighty God, says *Rafon* in the
 “ same Book, has forbid Philosophers to teach this
 “ mysterious Art to the vulgar, lest the World should
 “ perish. For this Cause that precious Medicine,
 “ which vivifies and preserves all Things in an equal
 “ Temperament, is so carefully concealed: For if all
 “ Men were alike rich, none would submit to serve
 “ the rest; there would be no longer any Government
 “ or Order in the World.

“ These Reasons, continued the *Cabalist*, are
 “ sufficient to justify the Philosophers writing in
 “ such a Manner as is intelligible only to those
 “ that are initiated in the sacred Mysteries of the
 “ *Cabalistick* Art. But there is another Thing
 “ which ties them down to a closer Silence, viz.
 “ the barbarous and inhuman Treatment such
 “ have met with, who have been guilty of any In-
 “ discretion in this Respect. There are Numbers
 “ of Tragical Histories whence Examples may be
 “ drawn, to caution others to act with more Re-
 “ serve. The unfortunate Hermit, who imparted
 “ the Secret to *Bragardin*, was murder’d by the
 “ Hand of that Russian. *Richard*, an *Englishman*,
 “ having spoke too plainly to the King of that
 “ Country, was executed in the Tower. You
 “ see then how much the Interest of Philosophers
 “ is concern’d, either to say nothing, or to speak
 “ in a Language intelligible only to their Dis-
 “ ciples.”

To what Purpose, replied I, do you write Books
 of this occult Science, since they can be understood by
 none but such as need no Instruction? You ought not,
 methinks, to publish Books which serve only to besoot
 Men of a covetous Disposition, and reduce them to
 extreme Poverty.

“ I perceive, said my new Master, that you ima-
 “ gine our Books to be much more unintelligible
 “ than they really are: For, however obscure
 “ these

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“ these Writings may be, it is not impossible, by
 “ divine Assistance, without which Men can do
 “ nothing, to penetrate their Meaning, and solve
 “ their darkest Enigmas. This is what I am now
 “ going to instruct you in, by giving you a Key
 “ to all the different Stiles in which our Philoso-
 “ phers have written. But, to pave the Way for
 “ this, I will here unfold, without Disguise, the
 “ fundamental Principle of our Philosophic Art.
 “ When the eternal Being created the World,
 “ he divided the Waters from the Waters. He
 “ then distributed the purer Part of these two Di-
 “ visions into three other Portions. Of the first
 “ and purest Part, he made all Things above the
 “ Firmament; of the second, he made the Fir-
 “ mament, the Planets and fixed Stars; of the
 “ third, he created the four Elements, in which he
 “ hid a Spirit of Life, which may be reckoned a
 “ fifth Element. This is the Principle, the Seed,
 “ the Support, the operative Virtue, of every thing
 “ in the Universe. This fifth Element, unknown
 “ to the Generality of Mankind, true Philosophers
 “ call the *universal Spirit*, *natural Magick*, the
 “ *Quintessence*, the *Elixir*, *Aurum potabile*, the
 “ *Stone*, *Mercury*, *Azoth*, *Water*, *Fire*, *Dew*, &c.
 “ They make use of all these different Terms, the
 “ better to conceal their Secrets; tho’ it must be
 “ own’d, that every one of these Names is very
 “ emphatick, and expressive of the Thing intend-
 “ ed. ’Tis called the *Quintessence*, because it re-
 “ sults from the Assemblage of the four Elements.
 “ They give it the Name of *Elixir*, on account
 “ of its admirable Virtue in curing Diseases and
 “ preserving Life. It has the Title of *Aurum po-
 “ tabile*, to denote that ’tis precious like Gold.
 “ It must be observed, that it is no Contradiction
 “ when Philosophers tell us, that this Matter is
 “ vegetable, animal and mineral; for, as the *uni-
 “ versal*

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“ *versal Spirit* cannot subsist without a Body, and
 “ as no Body can subsist without Life, it is diffu-
 “ sed through all the different Elements, and par-
 “ takes equally of the vegetable, animal, and mi-
 “ neral Faculty. All the Secret of our Art con-
 “ sists in finding out this *vital Spirit*, and putting
 “ it into a Capacity to act freely on any Body:
 “ For, being full of Heat and Life, it purifies and
 “ brightens every thing to which it has Access,
 “ and, in the End, infallibly effects the grand O-
 “ peration. The sage Philosophers, who have
 “ written on the Method of extracting from the
 “ other Elements this *prolifick and vivifying Seed*,
 “ have made use of several dark and enigmatical
 “ Ways of Expression, which are called *Styles*.
 “ *Merlin* made use of the *Allegorick Style*; King
 “ *Arthur*, of the *Parabolick*; the great *Hermes*, of
 “ the *Problematick*; *Arsileus*, of the *Typical*; *Bal-*
 “ *gus*, and the *Cosmopolite*, of the *Enigmatical*.
 “ With respect to all these different Styles, the
 “ Key of the two first will suffice to make the
 “ Knowledge of the rest easy.

“ *Merlin* speaking in the *Allegorick Style*, ex-
 “ presses himself thus; *The King, having drunk*
 “ *of the Water, can't mount his Horse*. The Mean-
 “ ing is, By a proper Mixture of Earth and Wa-
 “ ter, the Matter is render'd liquid. He adds, in
 “ another Place, *The King, having taken a Medi-*
 “ *cine of Sal Armoniac and Nitre, was found dead*.
 “ By this he intimates, that, by means of the *spe-*
 “ *cifick Projection*, or of the *Spirit* extracted from
 “ the four Elements, the liquid Part was entirely
 “ fix'd and converted into Gold, the Fire of the
 “ Furnace having consum'd all the Humidity.

“ The *Enigmatick Style* used by *Balgus* and the
 “ *Cosmopolite*, is no less obscure than the *Allego-*
 “ *rick* to all who are unacquainted with this *fifth*
 “ *Element*, this *Salt*, or *Spirit*, which I have told
 “ you

“ you is the *Powder of Projection*. For Instance,
 “ Look, say the Philosophers, *upon the Infant that*
 “ *sucks, and be not troubled, for here lies the Secret*
 “ *of the Art*. This dark Phrase signifies, that we
 “ must purify the active and passive Matter, *i. e.*
 “ the Sulphure and Mercury, by a Fire that must
 “ be managed with great Care; we must add Fuel
 “ in the same manner, as we increase the Quan-
 “ tity of Food to a Child, in proportion to its Age
 “ and Strength.

“ Thus you see, continued the *Cabalist*, that
 “ our Writings are not unintelligible to such as
 “ are initiated in the Mysteries of which they treat,
 “ and that we have Reason to hide our Secrets
 “ from the Eyes of the Profane.”

I shall readily forgive your Philosophers, said I, their affected Obscurity, because you say 'tis necessary. But I have still one great Doubt with respect to your admired Art; I can hardly believe, that any of your Virtuosi have ever brought it to that Perfection, as actually to extract this vivifying Salt from the other Elements. I am of Opinion likewise, that, notwithstanding all their boasted Power, never any made a few Yellow Boys. I appeal to you, Sir, who are an Adept in the Science, do you know the Secret of extracting that Spirit of Life, that Powder of Projection, which is absolutely necessary in the Work of Transmutation?

“ I grant, replied the *Cabalist*, that even those
 “ who know the Manner of Working, are yet
 “ far from Perfection in the grand Work. There
 “ are not, perhaps, two Persons in an Age for-
 “ tunate enough to manage the Fire with that
 “ Exactness necessary to arrive at the great End:
 “ The smallest Excess or Deficiency of Heat will
 “ destroy all the Labour of twenty or thirty Years;
 “ and whatever Knowledge a Man has, 'tis God
 “ alone who can prevent numberless Accidents,
 “ that

“ that will defeat all human Precautions. This
 “ is the Reason, that, of so many Sages who
 “ have laboured in this Art, so few have suc-
 “ ceeded. I must frankly own, tho’ I have re-
 “ vealed to you the most hidden Mysteries of the
 “ Science, I would by no means advise you to
 “ follow the Study of it, nay, was I not already
 “ engaged, I would not at this Day chuse it pre-
 “ ferable to many other Occupations. I have
 “ already consumed very considerable Sums; but
 “ though I have not yet attain’d the Art of ma-
 “ king Gold, I have discovered several other im-
 “ portant Secrets that have recompensed my Pains,
 “ and encouraged me to proceed in the Enter-
 “ prize.”

*It would then, replied I, be to no Purpose to per-
 suade you to quit so deceitful a Study. I would not
 offer to tell you what, no doubt, you have often told
 yourself: But I’ll be glad to learn from you, as Oc-
 casion offers, any Secrets you shall think fit to com-
 municate. With these Words I took Leave of the
 Chymist, who repeated his Promise to communi-
 cate whatever he found curious.*

It can’t be denied, my dear *Isaac*, that the Folly
 of the *Cabalists* and Chymical Artists is very ex-
 travagant; it must, however, be acknowledged,
 that to them we are indebted for a Multitude of
 useful Discoveries in experimental Philosophy. In
 searching for their *fifth Element*, and chimerical
Powder of Projection, they have brought to Light
 the Manner how the Vitriolick and Metallick Fluids
 coagulate in the Bowels of the Earth, and so form
 Minerals, Metals, and Stones, according to the
 different Sorts of Matter upon which they act.
 Chymistry, by its Fermentations and Sublimations,
 gives us a clear Idea of the Vegetation of Plants,
 and of the Growth of Animals. By its Distilla-
 tions we learn how the Sun, having first rarified
 the

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the Waters of the Sea, or of the Rivers, exhales them into the Air, where they form Clouds, which distil in Rain or Dew upon the Earth. So many Discoveries, which we owe to the Study of Chymistry, ought to plead even for the vain Researches of the *Cabalists*, since we reap the Profit of their Folly and Extravagance.

Adieu, my Friend: Live content and happy, and give thyself no Trouble about the *Philosopher's Stone*.

London, *****.



LETTER CLII.

AARON MONCECA to ISAAC ONIS.

THERE is no Nation, my dear *Isaac*, which is not chargeable with some wrong Step. The *French* reproach the *English* with burning *Joan d'Arc*, commonly called the *Maid of Orleans*, for no other Crime than having faithfully served her King and Country. They alledge further, that, in order to palliate their Cruelty and Injustice to that *French* Heroine, they had Recourse to Fraud and Imposture, and ridiculously accuse her of Sorcery and Witchcraft. The *English*, at this Day, allow, that their Ancestors were in the wrong to act so contrary to common Justice, and the Laws of War: But they maintain, that this *Maid of Orleans*, whom
most

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most of the *French* Historians honour as a Saint, was no more than a bold, enterprising Woman; and that the Courtiers of *Charles VII.* wisely made use of her to retrieve the Affairs of that Prince, and to remove the universal Panick that had seized the Soldiers.

This Diversity of Opinion among the Historians of the two Nations excited my Curiosity to to search the Matter to the Bottom, and bring forth the Truth from the midst of those Mists and Darknets with which it is surrounded. *Pasquier*, an Author above Suspicion of favouring Superstition, has given us an exact Account of the whole Process against *Joan d'Arc*. He looks upon her as a Saint, and warmly defends her Memory: But, if on examining the Proofs which this Historian brings to demonstrate the pretended Revelations of *Joan*, their Falsity can be made appear, we'll be forced to acknowledge that there was nothing miraculous in what she performed. In this Case, we must come into the Opinion of the *English*; and, while we assert that she was unjustly punished, we must allow that she was only a Tool to promote the Stratagems of the *French* King's Generals. Let us but a little reflect on the Reasons which prevail'd with *Pasquier* to believe the Maid of *Orleans* a Saint, and we'll easily discover their Weakness.

“ Never, says my Author, did any Person suc-
 “ cour *France* so seasonably, and so successfully,
 “ as this Maid; and never was the Memory of
 “ any Woman so bespatter'd and torn as hers has
 “ been. The *English* condemned and burnt her
 “ as an Heretick, and a Witch. Some even of
 “ our own Historians represent her as an artful
 “ Hypocrite, such as *Nam Pompeius* pass'd up-
 “ on *Rome*, in order to gain Credit among the
 “ People. This is the Opinion of *Langy*, in his
 VOL. III. I i “ Book

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“ Book of *Military Discipline*. To this others
 “ have added, that the *French* Lords put this
 “ Wench upon acting the Part she did; and that,
 “ when she pointed out the King among all his
 “ Courtiers at *Chinon*, she received a Signal to
 “ know him. Nay, some have been so base as
 “ to suggest, that *Baudricourt*, Governor of *Va-*
 “ *cozeurs*, debauch’d her; and, finding her of a
 “ ready Wit, put her upon this Enterprize.”

Observe, dear *Isaac*, that even when this Maid
 was living, the Truth of her divine Mission was
 much questioned, and that these Doubts grew and
 prevailed with Time. In the Age when *Pasquier*
 wrote, most People gave no manner of Credit
 either to the Sanctity or Wisdom of *Joan d’Arc*;
 on the contrary, they affirm that she had no other
 Inspiration but the Secrets of *Baudricourt*. As to
 the Moral Character of this Girl, I readily admit,
 that it was unexceptionable. The Proof that *Pas-*
quier alledges seems strong enough. *Her Chasti-*
ty, says he, *she preserved to the last, even in the*
midst of the Troops. Indeed ’tis certain that the
English, who wanted a specious Pretext to cover
 their Severity towards her, would not have fail’d
 to charge her with Incontinency, if any Evidence
 had appeared, and yet there is no such Article in
 the Process. But tho’ this may prove the Chasti-
 ty of *Joan d’Arc*, it says nothing for her Sanctity.
 Admit that *Baudricourt* did not debauch her, it
 doth not follow that therefore she had a Com-
 mission from Heaven; I don’t see a necessary
 Connection between being a Maid, and a Pro-
 phetess, or Deliverer of Nations. I agree with
 the *French* Historians, that *Joan d’Arc* never had
 a Bastard; but then I maintain, with the *Englisk*,
 that her pretended Mission was a notorious Im-
 posture. To be satisfied of this, let us hear what
 Account

Account *Pasquier*, who labours so heartily to have her canonized, gives of the Matter.

“ I shall, says that Author, run over the principal Articles on which *Joan d’Arc* was questioned’d by her Judges. Being charged to speak the Truth, she replied, that she would tell whatever concern’d her Father and Mother, but as to the Revelations concerning King *Charles*, she must be allowed eight Days, to know whether she may discover them or not. Being ask’d her Name, she said, that she was of the Village of *Dompne*, and in her own Country was called *Jeannete*, but in *France*, *Joan d’Arc*; that her Father’s Name was *James d’Arc*, and her Mother’s *Isabella*; that one of her Godfathers was *John Lingue*, and the other *John Berry*; that her Godmothers were called *Jane*, *Agnes*, and *Sybile*, besides some others whom she remembers to have heard her Mother speak of; that she was then about twenty nine Years of Age; that she was a Seamstress or Spinster, and not a Shepherdess; that she went once a Year to Confession; that she had frequently heard a Voice from Heaven, and seen a great Light; this she took for the Voice of an Angel, who admonish’d her to go into *France* and raise the Siege of *Orleans*. She was further directed to *Robert de Baudricourt*, Governor of *Vaucouleurs*, who would escort her thither.”

I fancy, my dear *Isaac*, if I had not already admitted the Virginity of our Heroine, I might match her Story with the Tale of Brother *Lucius*, which is put into Verse by the ingenious *La Fontaine*. Doth not *Baudricourt* act a Part not unlike the Hermit in that Story, who cries out, with a Voice like Thunder, *Good Woman, carry your Daughter to the Servant of God, who will beget upon her a Child that will one Day become a great Pope.* I

know very well that *Baudricourt* and *Lucius* acted from very different Motives; the latter from Love, the former from Policy. In both Cases the young Women might have been innocently drawn into the Snare. But as to our *Joan*, it appears, by her Conduct, that she was no Stranger to the Designs of those who had set her to work; she knew perfectly well how to play her Game, and was extremely desirous to pass for a Saint and Heroine.

I think, I discern a near Resemblance between *John d'Arc* and Miss *Cadiere*. The one had in view the Defeat of the *English*, and the other that of the *Jesuites*: They equally intended to impose upon the World, and acquire the Name of Sanctity; and both pretended a familiar Intercourse with the Saints. Our Maid gave out, that she conversed immediately with God, as *Pasquier* adds in her Process. She said, that *she knew God loved the Duke of Orleans; and that she had more Revelations concerning him, than concerning any Person living, except the King.*

Thou seest, dear *Isaac*, how the supreme Being communicated the greatest Secrets to this Saint. Nor was he less careful to provide faithful Messengers to instruct her in his Will. She informs the Judges likewise of this Particular.

“ Being ask’d when she heard the last Voice,
 “ she answered, Yesterday, three Times; once in
 “ the Morning, then about the Time of Vespers,
 “ and last of all at Night. Being interrogate, if
 “ she had ever seen any Fairies, she answered,
 “ none that she knew of; but that one of her God-
 “ mothers boasted, that she saw them often at the
 “ Fairy Tree, not far from the Village of *Domprie*.
 “ Being examined who they were that spoke to
 “ her, she replied, St *Katharine* and St *Margaret*,
 “ whom she had often both seen and touch’d since
 “ her

“ her being imprifoned, and kifs’d the Ground
 “ on which they trode; that ſhe had aſſumed a
 “ Man’s Habit at their expreſs Command, and
 “ was inſtructed by them what to anſwer when
 “ examined.”

Had I not Reaſon then to ſay, that Diſpatches were ſent her by the Hands of truſty Meſſengers? *Katharine* and *Margaret* were Couriers of ſome Figure. This ſingle Circumſtance will furniſh many admirable Reflections to any Monkish Author, who ſhall oblige the World with the Life of St. *Joan*. He could not miſs to obſerve the great Wiſdom in ſending female and not male Saints to converſe with our chaſte Maid: She would doubtleſs have ſtartled to find herſelf cheek by jowl with a Man; eſpecially if the Saint had been of the Order of *Cordeliers*, and appeared in his Habit: For we muſt notice, that theſe heavenly Viſits began at an Age when ſhe might have been eaſily ſcar’d out of her Wits. In one of her Anſwers ſhe ſays, that her firſt Converſation with *Katharine* and *Margaret* was at the Fairy Tree, when ſhe was but thirteen Years old.

Is it pardonable, my dear *Iſaac*, in an Author, otherwiſe of Merit, to go about to prove Inſpiration by Tales ſo viſibly fabulous. A Philoſopher, who makes uſe of his Reaſon, be his Religion what it will, ſhall no ſooner read theſe Anſwers of *Joan d’Arc*, than immediately he’ll ſee that the whole is a political Stratagem. None needs wonder at the odd Things he meets with in *Greek* and *Roman* Writers, when he ſees the moſt reputed *French* Hiſtorians gravely narrating this childiſh Fable, ſo contrary to common Senſe. With what Face can a *Nazarene*, whoſe Faith can ſwallow this Tale, reject the moſt ridiculous Stories he reads in *Herodotus*.

We will be further convinced of the Absurdity of this pious Fraud, if we attend but a little to the Conduct of this Woman, while she was in Prison: For, being solicited by her Judges to resume the Dress of a Woman, she replied, that *she wiss'd never to wear any female Garment except a Shift, after she was dead.* Afterwards it was proposed to give her the Sacrament, in case she would lay aside Man's Clothes; but she obstinately prefer'd the Breeches to every thing, and chose rather to be excommunicated than put on a Petticoat. However, at last she agreed to hear Mass in Woman's Habit, provided she might put on Man's Clothes again as soon as she came from Chapel. Was not all this a pretty Fancy?

But what is still more extraordinary, it was in obedience to the express Orders of St. *Katharine* and St. *Margaret* that *Joan* was so much attach'd to the Breeches. It is true, she paid dearly for her Complaisance. "The Proctor, says *Pasquier*, "having summ'd up the Evidence, Sentence was "pronounced by the Bishop and Deputy-Inquisitor; in which it was declared, that all that had "been done by her was a Cheat, and the Invention of the Devil, to delude the poor People; "that she was guilty of Blasphemy against God, "and Disobedience against her Parents, besides "her impious Behaviour in depriving herself of the "holy Communion rather than lay aside Man's "Dress. There concurr'd in this Sentence the "Bishops of *Constance* and *Lisieux*, the Chapter "of the Cathedral Church of *Roan*, sixteen Doctors, six Licentiates, as many Batchelors of Divinity, eleven Advocates of *Roan*. This Sentence was sent to the University of *Paris* for "their Opinion. They declare, that *John d'Arc* "was truly a Heretick, and a Schismatick, and "immediately they sent two Letters, one to the "King,

"King, and the other to the Bishop of *Beauvais*,
 "desiring that she might be put to Death."

Notwithstanding the Advice of the University, the *English* were inclin'd to save her Life, provided she would but give up the cursed Breeches that had hitherto so much infatuated her. Our Heroine finding, at last, that she must die, or put on a Petticoat, of the two Evils she wisely chose the latter, without waiting for the Permission of St. *Margaret*.

"Being carried into the Church, adds *Pasquier*,
 "and placed on a Scaffold, she was publicly re-
 "buked. Whereupon she declared aloud, that she
 "submitted to the Judgment of God and our holy
 "Father the Pope. But this not giving Satisfac-
 "tion, she protested that she would stand to the
 "Church's Determination; that, since so many
 "wise and learned Men were of opinion, that
 "her Visions were not from God, she was will-
 "ing to believe so too. Then she made a
 "publick Abjuration, which is inserted at length
 "in the Process. Upon this another Sentence
 "followed, absolving her from the Bond of
 "Excommunication, and condemning her to
 "perpetual Imprisonment. After this she resum'd
 "the Habit of her Sex, and was sent back to Pri-
 "son."

And now the Affairs of our Maid are in a pretty tolerable Condition; by sacrificing the beloved Breeches, she saved her Life. But the Devil of all was, that she had not consulted St. *Katharine* in the Affair. This Saint coming to make her a Visit in Prison, was not a little vexed to find her in Woman's Dress, and gave her a severe Reprimand. Tell me, Child, says Kate, who durst advise you to change your Habit, contrary to my positive Order? Be gone, strip immediately, and get into Man's Cloaths, in spite of all the Bishops and Batchelors

Batchelors in France. *Joan* obey'd, unhappily for her, as the Sequel of *Pasquier's* Relation will shew.

" They had, however, (says my Author) left
 " a Suit of Man's Cloaths by her, in order to
 " try her Sincerity. No sooner was she left alone,
 " than she repented of her Abjuration, and, upon
 " second Thoughts, resum'd her old Habit ? "

This Abjuration, my dear *Isaac*, resembles very nearly *Mils Cadiere's* Recantation of the Charge she had brought against Father *Girard* ; they both quickly return'd to their former Sentiments. The one was school'd by the *Jansenists*, as the other by *St. Katharine*. But our Maid paid dear for her Wilfulness.

" Early next Morning, being visited, and found
 " in Man's Apparel, she was ask'd how she came
 " to make this Change ? She replied, that she did
 " it at the Command of the *Saints*, and chose to
 " obey God rather than Man. Upon which she
 " was pronounced a Heretick relapsed ; and, in
 " consequence thereof, was delivered over to the
 " secular Arm, and condemned to be burnt a-
 " live. The University of *Paris*, willing to bear a
 " Part in this Tragedy, order'd a solemn Pro-
 " cession on the Feast of *St. Martin*, at which a
 " *Dominican* Friar made a virulent Declamation
 " against this poor Girl, to shew that all her Feats
 " were done by the Help of the Devil, and not
 " of God."

Behold what a Noise a Petticoat and Pair of Breeches made ? What Disturbance was occasion'd by the important Question, which of the two this masculine Maid should wear ? Was not this a worthy Controversy ? The *French* insist upon it, that *Joan* should by no means part with the Breeches ; the *English*, on the other hand, are no less positive that she must dress in Petticoats. Up-
 on

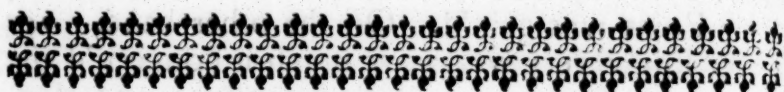
on this single Point the whole Affair turn'd. Indeed, there was greater Reason for the Dispute than at first Sight appears. The uncommon Courage with which the supposed Sanctity of this Maid had inspired the Army of *Charles VII.* had totally ruin'd the Affairs of the *English*: In order therefore to retrieve their Interest, it became necessary for them to make the Maid renounce all Pretence to Revelation: Now the Moment she laid aside the Breeches, their Point was gain'd. On the other hand, *Joan d'Arc* knew very well how much it concern'd the *French* that she maintain'd the Imposture, and especially to give it out that the Saints were interest'd in the Affair. This made her hold out so stiffly. At length, the Fear of Death getting the better of her Dissimulation, she consents to give up the Honour of her pretended Inspiration. As soon as she had taken this Step, the *English* ought to have rested there, having sufficiently ruin'd her Credit. But this could not gratify their Revenge, they laid therefore a Snare for her Life, by leaving the Breeches in the way. They might as well have shut up a hungry Dog in a Cook's Shop, gravely forbidding him to touch any thing. The Maid, recovering her Fright, reflects on the Consequence of the false Step she had made, and resolves to repair it. She flatters herself that the *English* durst not take her Life; but the Event proved how much she mistook their Temper.

In short, though I deny the Holiness of *Joan d'Arc*, I would be far from refusing her any Honour that she justly deserves. She was certainly a Heroine, and a Deliverer of her Country. The Cruelty of the *English* towards her, is an indelible Stain upon that Nation. They ought to have treated her, when a Prisoner, with the Respect due to a faithful Subject, who had zealously employed her Wit and Courage in the Service of her King
and

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and Country. If the *English* had at this Day such a Captive in their Hands, they would admire her Valour, and revere her Person, as much as they would despise her Pretence to Saintship. Adieu.

London, *****.



LETTER CLIII.

AARON MONCECA to ISAAC ONIS.

AS much as I'm prepossessed in favour of *Locke*, I can scarce give into his Opinion, that the Soul, at some Times, ceases totally to think, while we are asleep. I will not assert indeed, that this Opinion is absolutely false; I'm rather inclin'd to look upon it as doubtful, and should have been better pleased had he delivered this Doctrine as probable only, and not as certain. This sage Philosopher seems too positive, that the *Cartesians* have not rightly defined the Essence of the Soul, to consist in actual Thought. "We know, says he, "certainly, by Experience, that sometimes we "think; and hence we draw this infallible Conclusion, that we have in us something that hath "a Power of Thinking: But whether this Substance thinks continually or not, is what we can't "be assur'd of, any farther than Experience teaches "us. For, to say that actual Thought is an essential

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“sential Property of the Soul, is a plain begging
“the Question *.”

’Tis my Opinion, dear *Isaac*, that *Locke* had no
just Ground for this Criticism on the *Cartesians*.
They seem to have good Reason to justify their
Definition of a Soul.

“The Soul (say the *Cartesian* Philosophers)
“hath no Dimensions, neither Length, Height,
“nor Depth; none of these Properties of Matter
“can be ascrib’d to it. We know but of one of
“its Qualities, *viz*, the Faculty of Thinking :
“Have we not Reason then to believe, that it
“can’t subsist without this Faculty, and that it is
“its Essence, since it is the only Quality yet dis-
“cover’d. For as we know that Matter exists,
“only by means of its Extension; so we know,
“that there are Souls, by Thought. We never
“scruple to define Matter by Extension, because
“we know no material Being but what is extend-
“ed; ought we not, for the same Reason, to de-
“fine the Essence of the Soul by actual Thought,
“since we can’t conceive a spiritual Substance,
“which has not this Faculty of Thinking?”

I will not affirm that these Reasons are unan-
swerable, or altogether conclusive; but I must at
least say, that they deserve our Attention, and
ought to be thoroughly examined. The *Cartesian*
Doctrine, *that the Soul always thinks*, can’t be said
to be without Proof; and therefore *Locke* had no
Authority to charge these Philosophers with de-
ciding a Question of Fact rashly, and against Rea-
son; or to say, that there is nothing but what may
be prov’d in the same Manner. “I need only
“suppose, says he, that all Watches think, while
“the Pendulum is in motion, and this will prove
“suf-

* *Locke’s Essay on Human Understanding*, Book II. Chap. 1.
§ 10. All the other Quotations in this Letter are from the same
Chapter.

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“ sufficiently that my Watch thought all last Night.” To this the *Cartesians* might justly reply, *You have no Reason to suppose that all Watches think, while the Pendulum moves, not only because you have not the least Probability that the Motion of a Pendulum has any thing to do with Thought, but also because you are assured, that this Pendulum, being a material Substance, has no other Properties than those of Extension, Quantity and Thickness: But with respect to our Souls, the Case is very different: We maintain, that the Soul thinks, as well when we are asleep, as when we are awake, because we are sure the Faculty of Thought belongs to the Soul, not only when the Body is awake, but also when it is asleep. Of this the Remembrance of our Dreams is an evident Proof. We have therefore some Reason to conclude, that the Soul does continually, what we are sure it does, at some Times; whereas your Supposition of the Balance and Watch is absurd and ridiculous.*

I proceed to examine *Locke's* Sentiments on this Subject; and I beg, dear *Isaac*, that thou'lt favour me with thy Opinion concerning the Difficulties that cast up to me. “ The very first Time we fall asleep, (says that Philosopher) we'll be satisfied, that there is nothing in their Doctrine, who teach, *that the Soul always thinks.* At least those who at any time sleep without dreaming, can never be convinced that their Thoughts were in Action during the Space of four long Hours, while they knew nothing of the Matter. Nay further, if they are waked suddenly, in the Middle of that sleepy Contemplation, they can't give the least Account of what they were thinking. It will perhaps, be said, that the Soul thinks even in the deepest Sleep, but the Memory retains it not. But it seems hard to conceive, how the Soul in the sleeping Man should be this

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"Moment busy thinking, and the very next Moment, in the waking Man, not be able to recollect the least Circumstance of all the Train of Thought that passed in the Mind. To make a Man believe this, some better Proof than a bare Assertion would be necessary."

The *Cartesians* might answer to these Arguments, that far from resting their Doctrine upon the sole Credit of their Word, they appeal to daily Experience, which demonstrates the Truth of their Opinion. Indeed it doth not seem strange, that a Man, waking suddenly, should lose the Remembrance of what he was thinking while asleep, when we see every Day Men broad awake forgetting one Minute what they were thinking about the very Minute before, and striving, to no purpose, to call it to mind. There is not a Man in the World who can't from Experience attest this: Nothing is more common than to hear one say, *I had something to say to you this very Moment, but it has escaped me; when I have done all I can to recollect it, I can't think of it.* Now, my dear *Isaac*, since the Soul forgets totally what it was thinking the very last Moment, even while the Body is awake, I would ask, can it be thought strange if the same Soul loses the Remembrance of those Thoughts which employed it while the Body was asleep; and consequently could receive but slight Impressions, because its Organs and Senses are in a manner lock'd up. Will it be said, that the Soul may possibly rest for a Moment, *i. e.* cease from thinking, even when the Body is awake. This would be so glaring an Absurdity, that common Experience would sufficiently refute it. The celebrated *Locke* was too quick sighted to adopt this Sentiment; on the contrary, he positively asserts, "That the Soul never ceases to think, while a Man is awake, because actual Thought is the very Thing

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“ that constitutes the waking State.” Let me see then one who can assign a Reason for a Man’s forgetting his Thoughts while awake ; and the *Cartesians*, in their turn, shall explain how a Man, that has thought all Night, cannot retain the least Remembrance of it next Morning.

The Difficulty which *Locke* proposes with respect to the Inutility of the Soul’s thinking in Sleep, appears to me very inconsiderable. “ To think
“ often, says he, and not to retain our Thoughts
“ one Moment, is a very useless sort of Think-
“ ing ; and the Soul, in such a State, does very
“ little, if at all, excell a Looking-glass, which
“ receives a Variety of Images, but retains none.
“ They all vanish and disappear, without leaving
“ the least Trace behind them ; the Mirrour is never the better for such Images, nor the Soul for
“ such Thoughts.—If the Soul retains no Memory
“ of its Thoughts ; if it cannot lay them up, and
“ bring them forth upon occasion ; if it cannot reflect upon what is past, and make use of its former Reasonings and Experience ; to what Purpose does it think ? Those who make the Soul
“ think in this manner, degrade it little less than
“ those who will allow it to be nothing but the
“ subtle Parts of Matter. The Truth is, Characters written in the Dust, which the first Blast
“ of Wind will efface, or Impressions made on
“ an Assemblage of Atoms, or animal Spirits, are
“ just as useful as such Thoughts.—Nature makes
“ nothing in vain ; ’tis therefore hard to conceive,
“ that our infinitely wise Creator should bestow
“ upon us the noble Faculty of Thinking, to be
“ employed so idly, for at least one quarter of the
“ Time it is in Action.”

This Passage of our Author contains two Objections. The *first* respects the Inutility of Thought in Sleep : But the *Cartesians* may well reply, that
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those Thoughts, which *Locke* looks upon to be superfluous, may be very necessary, tho' we can't point at their particular Use. Because we can't comprehend the Use of a Thing, we must not hence conclude, that therefore it ought not be. The Weakness of the human Understanding makes it impossible for us to penetrate the Use of numberless Beings, whose Existence we have no Right to deny. Besides, Experience seems to confirm, that the Soul is better for the Thoughts wherewith it is entertained in Sleep, tho' they are not communicated to the Body. The Translator of *Locke* remarks very pertinently, that the Inutility of these Thoughts is, by no means, so certain as that Author imagines*. *A Child*, says he, *who has a Dozen Lines out of Virgil to get by Heart, reads them over three or four times before he goes to bed, and in the Morning, as soon as he awakes, he repeats them perfectly well. Now does his Soul think of these Verses while buried in a profound Sleep? The Child remembers nothing of the Matter: However, if the Soul actually ruminated on these Verses, as, I think, one may suppose with some Appearance of Reason, then here are Thoughts not altogether useless to a Man, tho' he have not the least Remembrance that his Soul was employed about them so much as for one Moment.*

This first Objection being removed, the second falls of itself. When we have proved, that the Thoughts of a Man asleep may be useful to him, even tho' he is not conscious that he thought, the received Maxim, *that Nature does nothing in vain, and that God, acting with infinite Wisdom, never bestows superfluous Faculties on any Creature*, can no longer be urged in the present Case. In order to give Force to these Arguments, it ought first of all to be proved, that the Thoughts of a Man asleep are absolutely useless; and even when this is

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done,

* Remarque à la Page 73. de la 2. Edition.

done, there would still remain a considerable Difficulty to be resolved. *Of what Use*, might one say to *Locke*, are *Dreams*? Are they very necessary to *Men*? What great Advantage do they reap from that Collection of whimsical and monstrous Ideas presented to their Imagination? Here are Thoughts that occupy the human Soul, while the Body is asleep; and yet they are little better than useless. God might therefore have seen it fit to grant Man a Power of forming other Thoughts equally useless, because all Remembrance of them is entirely lost.

Farewel, my dear *Isaac*; may Happiness attend thee.

London, *****.



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